John A. Stanton Jr.

New York -
March 1892 -

To Guy L. Wallis
March '97

Henry P. Stanton.
August '01.

BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

PAX VOBIS: Being a Popular Exposition of the Seven Sacraments, furnishing ready matter for Public Instruction, and suitable at the same time for private and family reading. Crown 8vo. Cloth, 6*s*.

ALLOCUTIONS OR SHORT ADDRESSES ON LITURGICAL OBSERVANCES AND RITUAL FUNCTIONS. With appendices on Parochial Organizations, Christian Doctrine Confraternities, Lending Libraries, The Sodality of the Living Rosary, Ladies' Associations of Charity, Purgatorian Societies, Mutual Benefit Societies, etc., etc. Crown 8vo. Cloth, 6*s*.

ENCHIRIDION CLERICORUM: Being a Rule of Life for Ecclesiastics as to their Principal Obligations in reference to their Sacred Ministry and their own Sanctification, as also their Intercourse with the world, including an Examination of Conscience for Retreats. Crown 8vo. Cloth, net, 4*s*. 6*d*.

*** *This work, being intended for the exclusive use of Ecclesiastics, will be supplied only on the application of a Clergyman in each instance.*

SACRED RHETORIC; or, the Art of Rhetoric as applied to the Preaching of the Word of God. Crown 8vo. Illustrated. Cloth, 4*s*.

BERTHA DE MORNAY, Sister of Charity: Her Life and Writings. With Preface by Natalis de Wailly, Member of the French Institute. Translated from the French. Fcap. 8vo. Cloth, gilt, 3*s*. 6*d*.

CLAIMS OF THE UNINSTRUCTED DEAF MUTE TO BE ADMITTED TO THE SACRAMENTS. By the Author of "Programmes of Sermons." 1*s*.

LETTER TO THE ARCHBISHOPS AND BISHOPS OF IRELAND in vindication of a Dissertation, entitled "Claims of the Uninstructed Deaf Mute." By the Author of "Programmes of Sermons," etc. 1*s*.

BROWNE AND NOLAN, DUBLIN.

L54

PROGRAMMES

OF

SERMONS AND INSTRUCTIONS

COMPRISING

(*According to the course laid down by the Catechism of the Council of Trent*)

THE APOSTLES' CREED;

THE COMMANDMENTS OF GOD, AND PRECEPTS OF THE CHURCH;

PRAYER AND THE SACRAMENTS.

AS ALSO,

AN EXPOSITION OF CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE.

FOURTH EDITION, ENLARGED

WITH "GUIDE," ADAPTING THE "PROGRAMMES" TO THE GOSPELS OF ALL THE SUNDAYS AND HOLIDAYS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR.

1880

DUBLIN: BROWNE & NOLAN, PRINTERS & PUBLISHERS.

NEW YORK, CINCINNATI, AND ST. LOUIS:

BENZIGER BROTHERS,

Printers to the Holy Apostolic See.

12041

ALMA COLLEGE
251.8
LIBRARY
AN78
Alma, California

CONTENTS.

PAGE

ADDRESS TO THE MOST REVEREND THE ARCHBISHOPS AND BISHOPS OF IRELAND xi

PREFATORY ADDRESS TO YOUNG PREACHERS . . . xvii

PART I.—THE APOSTLES' CREED.

PARTICULAR PREFACE TO PART I. xxv

PRELIMINARY DISCOURSE 1

FIRST ARTICLE.

["I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of Heaven and Earth."]

First Discourse: "The Existence of God, and that there is but one God" 4

Second Discourse: "The Work of the Six Days" . . 10

Third Discourse: "Nature and Perfections of God" . . 12

Fourth Discourse: "On the Angels" 14

Fifth Discourse: "Guardian Angels" 15

Sixth Discourse: "The Fallen Angels" . . . 19

Seventh Discourse: "Man, his Creation, Dignity, and Fall, and the Promise of a Redeemer" 27

Eighth Discourse: "On God, as our Father, presiding over, preserving, ruling, and governing the Universe" . . 31

Ninth Discourse: "On the Trinity" . . . 34

SECOND ARTICLE.

["And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord."]

Tenth Discourse. 38

THIRD ARTICLE.

["Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, and born of the Virgin Mary."]

Eleventh Discourse; First on Third Article . . . 41

Twelfth Discourse; Second on Third Article . . . 44

Thirteenth Discourse; Third on Third Article . . 47

Fourteenth Discourse: Fourth on Third Article . . 51

Fifteenth Discourse: Fifth on Third Article . . . 56

Sixteenth Discourse; Sixth on Third Article . . . 57

Seventeenth Discourse: Seventh on Third Article . . 59

FOURTH ARTICLE.

["He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried."]

Eighteenth Discourse 62

FIFTH ARTICLE.

["He descended into hell, the third day He rose again from the dead."]

Nineteenth Discourse 64

PAGE

SIXTH ARTICLE.

["He ascended into Heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God."]

Twentieth Discourse 66

SEVENTH ARTICLE.

["From thence He will come to judge both the living and the dead."]

Twenty-first Discourse: First on Seventh Article . . 68
Twenty-second Discourse: Second on Seventh Article . 73

EIGHTH ARTICLE.

["I believe in the Holy Ghost."]

Twenty-third Discourse: First on Eighth Article . . 75
Twenty-fourth Discourse: Second on Eighth Article . . 81
Twenty-fifth Discourse: Third on Eighth Article . . 83
Twenty-sixth Discourse: Fourth on Eighth Article . . 89
Twenty-seventh Discourse: Fifth on Eighth Article . . 93

NINTH ARTICLE.

["The Holy Catholic Church, the Communion of Saints."]

Twenty-Eighth Discourse: First on Ninth Article . . 99
Twenty-ninth Discourse: Second on Ninth Article . . 106
Thirtieth Discourse: Third on Ninth Article . . . 111
Appendix to do. 117
Thirty-first Discourse: Fourth on Ninth Article . . 121
Thirty-second Discourse: Fifth on Ninth Article . . 127

TENTH ARTICLE.

["The Forgiveness of Sins."]

Thirty-third Discourse 135

ELEVENTH ARTICLE.

["The Resurrection of the Body."]

Thirty-fourth Discourse: First on Eleventh Article. "On Death" 138
Thirty-fifth Discourse: Second on Eleventh Article . "Death of the Sinner" 142
Thirty-sixth Discourse: Third on Eleventh Article . "A Happy Death" 145
Thirty-seventh Discourse: Fourth on Eleventh Article . 150

TWELFTH ARTICLE.

["Life Everlasting."]

Thirty-eighth Discourse: First on Twelfth Article . . 154
Thirty-ninth Discourse: Second on Twelfth Article . . 163
Fortieth Discourse: Third on Twelfth Article . . 167
Forty-first Discourse: Fourth on Twelfth Article . . 176
Forty-second Discourse: Fifth on Twelfth Article . "Eternity" 182

PART II.—ON SIN, THE DECALOGUE, AND THE PRECEPTS OF THE CHURCH.

PARTICULAR PREFACE TO PART II. 191

ON MORTAL SIN.

First Discourse 195
Second Discourse 197

PAGE
Venial Sin 200
The Seven Capital Sins.
Mode of Treatment applicable to each 204
On the Observance of the Commandments of God in general . 206
The First Commandment of God.
First Discourse: "On Faith" 208
Second Discourse: "On Hope" 211
Third Discourse: "On Charity" 213
Fourth Discourse: "On Religion" 214
The Second Commandment of God.
First Discourse: "What is commanded by this Commandment" 218
Second Discourse: "What is forbidden by this Commandment" 219
The Third Commandment of God 220
The Fourth Commandment of God.
First Discourse: "Duties of Children to their Parents" . 221
Second Discourse: "Duties of Parents towards their Children" 223
Third Discourse: "Duties of Servants and Persons under Authority" 226
Fourth Discourse: "Masters, Mistresses, and Persons in Authority" 227
Fifth Discourse: "The Duties of Husband and Wife" . 228
The Fifth Commandment of God.
First Discourse 230
Second Discourse: "Envy, Anger, Hatred, and Revenge" . 234
Third Discourse: "Drunkenness" 236
Fourth Discourse: "Scandal" 240
Fifth Discourse: "Fraternal Charity" 243
The Sixth Commandment of God 245
The Seventh Commandment of God 248
The Eighth Commandment of God.
First Discourse 249
Second Discourse: "Lies" 250
Third Discourse: "Discipline of the Tongue" . . 252
The Ninth and Tenth Commandments of God . . . 256
The Commandments of God in general, as comprised in the two great Precepts of loving God and our Neighbour:
"The Love of God" 261
"The Love of our Neighbour" 264
Concluding Discourse 268
The Precepts of the Church in general 270
First Precept of the Church 275
Second Precept of the Church 278
Third Precept of the Church 282
Fourth Precept of the Church 284
Fifth Precept of the Church 287
Sixth Precept of the Church 292
The Precepts of the Church in general:
Concluding Instruction 294

PAGE

PART III.—ON PRAYER.

Special Preface to Part III. 299
On Prayer
First Instruction: Necessity of Prayer 301
Second Instruction: Its Efficacy 303
Third Instruction: The Conditions of Prayer . . . 304
Devotion to the Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ . . 305
The Lord's Prayer; First Discourse 312
First Petition: "Hallowed be Thy Name" . . . 318
Second Petition: "Thy kingdom come" 324
Third Petition: "Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven" 329
Fourth Petition: "Give us this day our daily bread" . 337
Fifth Petition: "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them who trespass against us" 343
Sixth Petition: "Lead us not into temptation" . . 349
Seventh Petition: "Deliver us from evil. Amen." . . 356
The Hail Mary 363
Devotion to the Blessed Virgin 368
Devotion to Angels and Saints 370
Religious Emblems 372
Presence of God 374
Examination of Conscience 376
On Spiritual Reading 378
On Meditation, or Mental Prayer 383

PART IV.—ON THE SACRAMENTS.

Special Preface to Part IV. 391
The Sacraments in General 395
Baptism 397
Confirmation 399
The Blessed Eucharist:
First Instruction; Doctrine of the Real Presence . . 400
Second Instruction: The Blessed Eucharist as a Sacrifice . 402
Third Instruction: Ceremonies of the Mass . . . 405
Fourth Instruction: Manner of assisting at Mass . . 409
Fifth Instruction: The Blessed Eucharist as a Sacrament; Its Effects, and Dispositions for worthily receiving it . . 412
Sixth Instruction: Immediate Preparation; Manner of Receiving, and Thanksgiving after . . . 415
Seventh Instruction: Visiting the Blessed Sacrament . . 417
Eighth Instruction: On the Sacred Heart of Jesus in the Most Holy Sacrament 420
Introductory Instruction on the Sacrament of Penance; Its End, Efficacy, Necessity, Obligation, and Parts . . 422
Second Instruction: Examination of Conscience . . 423
Third Instruction: Method of Examination of Conscience . 425
Fourth Instruction: On Contrition 428
Fifth Instruction: Purpose of Amendment . . . 429

PAGE

Sixth Instruction: The Method or Means of exciting one's self to Contrition 430
Seventh Instruction: Confession 431
Eighth Instruction: Manner of making Confession . . 433
Ninth Instruction: Justification, or what is effected in the Soul of the Penitent in virtue of the Absolution he receives in Confession 434
Tenth Instruction: On Thanksgiving after Confession, and Satisfaction 437
Eleventh Instruction: On General Confessions . . 439
Indulgences 443
Extreme Unction: Holy Viaticum and Preparation for Death . 445
The Sacrament of Orders 448
Matrimony 452
The Sacramentals 454

PART V.—AN EXPOSITION OF CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE.

Special Preface to Part V. 461
Lesson I.: On God and the Creation of the World . . 473
Lesson II.: On Man, and the End of Man 476
Lesson III.: On the Apostles' Creed 480
Lesson IV.: On the Trinity and the Incarnation . . . 483
Lesson V.: On Our First Parents 488
Lesson VI.: On Original Sin 491
Lesson VII.: On Jesus Christ, &c. 493
Lesson VIII.: On Christ's Descent into Hell, and on His Resurrection and Ascension into Heaven . . . 496
Lesson IX.: On the Descent of the Holy Ghost; on the New Law, and on the Sign of the Cross 499
Lesson X.: On the True Church 502
Lesson XI.: The Church (*continued*) 507
Lesson XII.: On Sin 511
Lesson XIII.: On Purgatory 516
Lesson XIV.: On the Ten Commandments 519
Lesson XV.: On the First Commandment 522
Lesson XVI.: First Commandment (*continued*) . . . 525
Lesson XVII.: On the Second, Third, and Fourth Commandments 529
Lesson XVII. (*continued*): On the Fourth Commandment . 532
Lesson XVIII.: On the Fifth, Sixth, Seventh, and Eighth Commandments 536
Lesson XVIII. (*continued*): On the Seventh and Eighth Commandments 539
Lesson XIX.: On the Ninth and Tenth Commandments . . 543
Lesson XX.: On the Precepts of the Church . . . 547
Lesson XXI.: The Precepts of the Church (*continued*) . . 551
Lesson XXII.: On Prayer 555
Lesson XXIII.: On the Lord's Prayer and Hail Mary . . 560
Lesson XXIV.: On the Sacraments in General, and on Baptism . 567

PAGE

LESSON XXV. On Confirmation 570
LESSON XXVI.: On the Blessed Eucharist . . . 574
LESSON XXVI. (*continued*): The Sacrifice of the Mass . . 580
LESSON XXVII.: On Communion and Penance . . . 586
LESSON XXVIII.: On Confession and Indulgences . . 591
LESSON XXVIII. (*continued*): On Confession and Indulgences . 596
LESSON XXIX.: Extreme Unction, Holy Orders, and Matrimony . 602
LESSON XXX.: On the General Judgment . . . 607

APPENDIX.

GUIDE TO "PROGRAMMES," ETC. 613
First Sunday of Advent 614
Second Sunday of Advent 615
Third Sunday of Advent 617
Fourth Sunday of Advent 618
Sunday within the Octave of Christmas . . . 619
First Sunday after the Epiphany 620
Second Sunday after Epiphany 621
Same Sunday after Epiphany 621
Third Sunday after Epiphany 622
Fourth Sunday after Epiphany 623
Fifth Sunday after Epiphany 623
Sixth Sunday after Epiphany 624
Septuagesima Sunday 625
Sexagesima Sunday 626
Quinquagesima Sunday 627
Ash-Wednesday 627
First Sunday of Lent 628
Second Sunday of Lent 628
Third Sunday of Lent 629
Fourth Sunday of Lent 630
Passion Sunday 631
Palm Sunday 632
Good Friday 632
Easter Sunday 632
Low Sunday 633
Second Sunday after Easter 634
Third Sunday after Easter 634
Fourth Sunday after Easter 635
Fifth Sunday after Easter 636
Sunday within the Octave of the Ascension . . . 637
Whit-Sunday 638
Trinity Sunday 638
Second Sunday after Pentecost 639
Third Sunday after Pentecost 640
Fourth Sunday after Pentecost 641
Fifth Sunday after Pentecost 642
Sixth Sunday after Pentecost 643

PAGE

Seventh Sunday after Pentecost 643
Eighth Sunday after Pentecost 645
Ninth Sunday after Penetecost 645
Tenth Sunday after Penetecost 646
Eleventh Sunday after Penetecost 647
Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost 647
Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost 648
Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost 649
Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost 649
Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost 650
Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost 650
Eighteenth Sunday after Pentecost 651
Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost 652
Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost 652
Twenty-first Sunday after Pentecost 653
Twenty-second Sunday after Pentecost 654
Twenty-third Sunday after Pentecost 654
Twenty-fourth Sunday after Pentecost 655
Festivals 656

ADDRESS

(AS IN FIRST EDITION)

TO

THE MOST REVEREND THE ARCHBISHOPS AND BISHOPS OF IRELAND.

My Lords,

With the view of assisting our Students of this Establishment in their practice of preaching, as a preparation for their Sacred Ministry, we have drawn up a course of Programmes, which we have placed in their hands for this purpose. Our intention did not aim beyond the use they would make of them, but the transcribing became a constantly recurring labour, from year to year, encroaching considerably on the time of the Students, and requiring much vigilance and care on our part to prevent mistakes, and correct them as they might occur. On this account we resolved to have them printed, once for all; and, having taken this resolution, we allowed ourselves to think that, beyond our Students, they might perhaps be of some use to the clergy at large in the sacred function of preaching. Of course, it is only through your Lordships we could think of giving effect to this idea, and therefore is it that we come, humbly and reverently, before you to ask your approval for the general publication of these Programmes, under such supervision as you may be pleased to appoint.

They are arranged in a consecutive series, and extend over the entire matter of preaching, according to the divisions of the Catechism of the Council of Trent, into what we are to believe, or the Apostles' Creed; what we are to do and avoid, or the Commandments of God, and the Precepts of the Church; what we are to ask of God, or prayer; and finally, what we receive from God, or the Sacraments.

In drawing up these Programmes, we have kept the principle

steadily in view, that the preaching of God's Word is a personal function for every individual Preacher, in the proper exercise of which nature and grace combine, so that by his own understanding and his own heart he acts on the understandings and hearts of his hearers through the efficacy and grace of the Divine Word, as it goes forth from his lips. We consider that, for this purpose, God is pleased to bestow upon those whom He calls to the Ministry of His Word, in addition to their natural resources, a special grace, "*giving to every one*," as our Saviour says in the Gospel, "*according to his proper ability*." (*Matt.* xxv. 15).

No doubt, my Lords, it may be alleged, as Solomon said of old, "*Nothing under the sun is new, neither is any man able to say: Behold this is new.*" (*Eccles.* i. 10). And it may be said, especially in the matter of religion, that nothing can be advanced that has not been repeated over and over already, and Preachers consequently may well suggest that whatever they can bring forward has been much better expressed by eminent Pulpit Orators before them, whose sermons and instructions they can well and easily have recourse to. This, indeed, we admit to be quite true; but we feel, at the same time, that your Lordships would not allow it to be inferred from such premises, that a Preacher of moderate abilities would succeed better by committing to memory, and so delivering the production of another, superior though it might be in itself, than by using the resources of his own mind, aided by God's grace, to put together a composition, which would be strictly his own, however inferior it might be in rhetorical merit. In the matter of composition, as in other matters, the law of aptitude must have its application. The rule has long since been laid down, "*Metiri se quemque suo modulo ac pede verum est*," or, as it has been better expressed, because in a higher sense, by St. Paul: "*We are not to glory beyond our measure, but according to the measure of the rule which God hath measured to us.*" (2 *Cor.* x. 13).

Nevertheless, my Lords, we felt bound to recollect that nature

may be improved by art, and that our natural resources are susceptible of being largely developed by culture; and we had to bear in mind especially, that the Almighty in distributing His talents expects to receive back not only what is "*His own*," but His own "*with usury*" besides, as the fruit of our industry. Accordingly, the Minister of God's Word is to endeavour, by all the aid that comes within his reach, to improve the resources and gifts he has received "*according to the measure of the giving of Christ.*" (*Ephes.* iv. 7).

With a view, therefore, to afford our Students a suitable and practical training, whilst under our direction, for the high and holy office of preaching the Word of God, we have kept steadily before our mind, in the Programmes to be submitted to your Lordships, these two great principles, first, that preaching should be the personal function of every Preacher in accordance with his natural resources and the grace of his ministry, and secondly, that both may be largely assisted by extraneous aid; and in pursuance of these principles we have left large voids to be filled up, and ample scope for personal ability, confining ourselves very much to the task of supplying the materials, which the Preacher himself will have to work up into his own composition, drawing on his own powers of invention, and having recourse to the sources we point out for the purpose.

In our references we purposely omit the highest standards of sacred eloquence. For, much though we admire the great Heralds of Salvation, whom the Almighty is pleased to raise up for special reasons in His Church, from time to time, it would be a great indiscretion to hold them up as examples for ordinary minds to attempt to imitate. Neither have we looked for the highest degree of perfection to be attained by the most exquisite culture. Our aim has rather been to deal with ordinary abilities and ordinary gifts, according to ordinary opportunities of training, recollecting that, if many be not called to become first-class Preachers, all who undertake "*the Ministry of the Word*" are at least bound to qualify themselves to become "*Masters in Israel.*"

Your Lordships will also observe, that for the same reason we have not pretended to any rhetorical merit in the composition of the Programmes, it being our desire to leave every one to form his style according to the character of his own mind; and we have studiously avoided all far-fetching and high-soaring, bearing in mind the teaching of the Apostle, that in the congregations our young aspirants to the Sacred Ministry will have to address—"*there are not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble*" (1 *Cor.* i. 26); and that, therefore, their preaching, as his, must not be "*in loftiness of speech or of wisdom, declaring the testimony of Christ.*" (1 *Cor.* ii. 1).

As it has been mentioned, the Programmes extend over the entire course of matter laid down by the Catechism of the Council of Trent, comprising more than a hundred subjects in a consecutive series. By this arrangement each subject leads on to the subject immediately following, whilst every successive subject renews and deepens the impression of the one preceding, and all combine to furnish a complete and methodised body of teaching by this connection.

Some of the subjects are treated in sermon style, others in simple didactic or instructional style, whilst others again, on account of the mixed nature of the matter, partake of both styles.

The divisions are very simple, consisting of a short Introduction with a Statement of the subject, the Body of the discourse with its component parts, and the Conclusion, all arranged so as to combine distinctness of detail with unity of design throughout; and some of the subjects are more developed than others, according as it has been deemed desirable to afford greater help in the treatment of them.

At the end of each Programme we refer to Authors that may be consulted, confining ourselves for the most part to the various Treatises of Theology according to the subject matter, the Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent, the Catechism of the Council, Challoner's Meditations, and Bishop Hay's Works,

especially the Sincere and Devout Christian, which are valuable and copious Repertories for preaching. We constantly refer also to an admirable French work, entitled "Projets d'Instructions," par M. Guillet, which contains a large and varied course of subjects, handled in a very practical manner. These works fall in with our idea of doing little more than furnishing the materials for composition, leaving the Preacher extensive room for the exercise of his own abilities, and industry, in co-operation with the grace of his ministry. We draw largely on the Sacred Scriptures, not only for argument and illustration, but also for phraseology, feeling that the words of inspiration, even in an accommodative sense, impart a supernatural elevation to the preaching of the Divine Word.

In addition to these Programmes, we have also prepared "An Exposition of the Christian Doctrine," to aid our Students in an exercise they have of expounding the Catechism with a view to that very useful mode of preaching the Word of God. The Exposition is in the form of a running commentary on the text of Butler's Third size Catechism. It can be appended, if it seem well to your Lordships, to the Programmes.

Awaiting with all due deference and respect your Lordships' goodwill, with which we shall be happy in this, as well as in every other matter, to comply,

I have the honour to remain, with profound respect,

Your Lordships' most obedient Servant,

THE AUTHOR.

June 16*th*, 1880.

PREFATORY ADDRESS

TO

YOUNG PREACHERS

RESPECTING THE USE TO BE MADE OF THE FOLLOWING PROGRAMMES.

THE following Programmes were originally prepared for the use of an Ecclesiastical Seminary, to facilitate for the students their essay-preaching, with a view to their future ministry. This will account for their peculiar form, which otherwise might appear somewhat strange, and not easy to explain. I must say, however, I am not much solicitous about their form, as I rely chiefly upon the matter they contain for the good I have in view.

It is my object, with the Divine assistance, to make your preaching the Word of God a personal function, to be discharged by yourself according to your own resources, aided by the grace of your ministry, instead of your being a second-hand Preacher using the words of others in an off-by-heart repetition, either wholly or in part, of their sermons or instructions. With this view the following Programmes place in your hands very little more than the materials of the various subjects, together with a certain order, in which they are to be treated, leaving everything else to the inventive powers of your own mind, together with the grace which you are to invoke for the due performance of a function so largely affecting the glory of God and the salvation of souls.

It is well, therefore, that you should distinctly understand that these Programmes are not designed to free you from labour in preparing your sermons and instructions, but only to assist you, and guide you in the labour you will find indispensable, if you are to be an efficient Preacher of God's Word. It is important, therefore, for the due use of the following Programmes, to distinguish accurately between the assistance you may derive from their contents, and the efforts you yourself must employ to turn them to a profitable account.

They will assist you, in the first place, by putting before you a course of subjects combined in concatenated order. Subjects so treated have a great advantage over desultory preaching, inasmuch as by their connection each subject is a preparation for that which follows; whilst that which follows impresses more deeply the subject that goes before, and the minds of the faithful, whom you address, are in this way brought through a regular course of instruction, whilst the moving truths of religion act with more power and effect to impart and maintain a hatred of sin, and a love of virtue, and thus conduct your hearers more successfully in the way of salvation.

In the second place, the subjects are divided so as to assign in the general arrangement a due quantity of distinct matter to each, thereby avoiding repetitions, and furnishing what is needful or suitable to be put forward according to the end and scope of the subject.

In the third place, the matter in each subject is arranged in a certain order with a view to consecutiveness, as the effect of preaching, like all public speaking, is greatly impaired by incoherency or desultory treatment of the subject-matter. The confusion issuing from the mind of the Preacher, or Speaker, in such cases, can only produce confusion in the minds of his hearers, instead of imparting clear ideas and distinct impressions, which should be the object of all language, whether oral or written.

This arrangement of subjects in a consecutive course, with an assignment to each subject of a due quantity of appropriate matter set forth with order and method, it is hoped, will go far to facilitate the difficulties young Preachers experience in the beginning, as they enter "on the ministry of the Word." But all this requires still much labour and diligent application on their part; and nothing can be more disappointing than to expect to become an effective Preacher on account of a certain readiness of tongue, which one may possess either as a natural gift, or as the result of mere practice by intercourse with society. Words are only sounds when separated from ideas and sentiments, and consequently to speak with effect on any subject, it

is necessary that the subject be first conceived in the mind, and that the action of the tongue be governed and regulated by previous action from within. Hence the word of the lips should be first the word of the mind, and the former is only the investing of the latter with vocal expression.

On this account a ready tongue is justly considered a disadvantage to a certain degree for public speaking, inasmuch as a reliance upon it may lead to a disregard, or neglect, of that exercise of mind necessary to put matter on the lips in speaking, and the Speaker may say a great deal in words, but little for any practical result upon his hearers.

May I, therefore, invite attention to the following suggestions, I would venture to offer as to the use I intended to be made of these Programmes, in the original design I had in drawing them up :

First, I would have you study the subject, so as to take it in, and impress it on your mind in a general view of it according to its scope and extent, outlining it in thought and reflection, as a painter rough-draughting his picture.

Secondly, you should fill up this outline in your mind by an orderly and consecutive study of the matter in detail, making it your own as matter alone, and apart from the language in which it is expressed. Here let me observe, I attach no importance to the language I use, except in so far as it may convey to your mind the matter it expresses, and it should be contrary to the object I have in view, that, you would sooner make use of my words for the reproduction of the matter, which, at this stage, it is supposed you have realized within your own mind. It is in this process we digest the matter of our study, assimilating it to the structure of our minds, in the same way as the work of digesting our corporal food assimilates it to, and identifies it with, the substance of our bodies.

Thirdly, the matter being so digested in your mind, you are now to put it forth in words, and as by study it has become identified with your mind within you, you are to express it according to the character and special form of your mind, in order that the reproduction of it may be your own proper and genuine work.

Fourthly, we are now arrived at what is called style in language, which is nothing more than the out-showing, in words, of our mind according to the form and character God has given it, and which must be as various as our minds themselves are different.

Fifthly, in this variety, however, there are three common ends we are to aim at, which are, according to St. Augustine, clearness, agreeableness, and strength: clearness, in order to be easily understood; agreeableness, in order to be heard with pleasure; and strength, in order to impart conviction or excite emotion; or, as the holy Doctor would express it, "ut veritas pateat, ut veritas placeat, ut veritas moveat, ut non solum intelligenter, verum etiam libenter, et obedienter audiaris." (*De Doct. Christ.*)

To enter upon a detailed explanation of these qualities of style, would be attempting a dissertation on a department of Rhetoric, which would take me beyond the purpose of this address. However, I will permit myself to say, that the effectiveness of our speaking for the purposes of instructing, pleasing, and moving, depends upon our having well digested within our minds the matter we venture to speak of.

Sixthly, but the young Preacher should not go at once from digesting his matter to the delivery of it. He has to pass through the stage of writing. It is only with pen in hand he can test the work of his mind, and in the beginning, and for a considerable time, he will find gaps to fill up, and the ink will be now and then interrupted in its flow, till by further thought and reflection he will have renewed its current. By this means we discover, that when we think we have digested our matter, the process has been only partially accomplished, and if in this crude state of mind we would undertake to speak on a given subject, we should expose ourselves inevitably to the liability of breaking down altogether, or of repeating over and over the same ideas, or saying and unsaying the same things, of frequent digressions, of embarrassed and obscure statements, and not unlikely of uncouth phraseology, and even bad grammar.

Seventhly, having written your subject, you are to commit it to memory. You will do so with great exactness in the beginning,

Afterwards, when you will have acquired confidence, and find no difficulty in substituting words for words, in modifying phrases or changing their form, in the course of delivery, you may become less exact, till by degrees you will find it sufficient to have read over your paper attentively, and impressed the matter distinctly on your mind. Whatever may be wanted will be prompted by your clear conception of the subject, and often with more freshness and vigour than if you were to repeat your composition word for word.

Eighthly, you will not allow yourself to be discouraged by the labour of writing, and committing to memory such a quantity of matter. The labour bears no proportion to the results. Throwing your mind on paper is a matter of practice, and when you have a clear conception of your subject, writing goes on, after a time, as fast almost as you can ply your pen. As to committing your own composition, having emanated from your own mind, it returns with very little difficulty, to be caught up and retained by your memory; and, even at any time afterwards, you recall it by almost a single perusal, on account of the natural facility we have of reviving our impressions and recollections on any subject we have once well elaborated in our minds. You perceive, therefore, that by this labour of writing, and committing to memory, you are, besides the immediate advantage it affords, laying up store for future use, which you can draw upon at ease, as the occasions of your ministry will require; whereas if, exempting yourself from this labour, you were to rely upon a certain readiness of language, you would, as a consequence, have the ever-recurring trouble of elaborating anew the subjects you would have to speak on, as if you never had spoken on them before, and your treatment of them should be liable, moreover, to all the defects already mentioned. By all means, therefore, write and commit to memory. Practice will soon surmount the first difficulties, and the results will be as invaluable as they will be enduring.

Ninthly, you will observe at the end of each Programme reference made to certain sources for consultation. It will not be

necessary to recur to them all, as it will be sufficient for you to collect from any of them the materials you require, making your own selection.

To sum up, therefore, what I wish to say to you in this Address; you have presented to you a long and varied collection of preaching materials, divided into courses according to the arrangement laid down by the Catechism of the Council of Trent. These materials are parcelled out as required by the several subjects of each course, and put in order for consecutive treatment, leaving you room for the exercise of your own mind to clothe the materials with your own language, so as to make your preaching, as it should be, your own genuine work. For this end labour is indispensable on your part. You will have to study in order to digest the materials; you will have to write, and you will have to commit to memory. But this labour will amply repay you in results, so that in the end, that is, after a few years, you will be able to speak effectively, and with very little trouble of preparation on any subject that may occur to you in the order of your sacred ministry. Labour is facilitated by zeal, for, as St. Francis de Sales would say to us: "Nihil impossibile amanti Deum. Pectus est quod facit disertos."

I shall, therefore, conclude in addressing to you the exhortation of the great Apostle of the Gentiles to his beloved Timothy: *Testificor coram Deo et Jesu Christo, qui judicaturus est vivos et mortuos, per adventum ipsius, et regnum ejus: Praedica verbum; insta opportunè, importunè; argue, obsecra, increpa, in omni patientiâ et doctrinâ, . . . opus fac evangelistae, ministerium tuum imple*" (2 *Tim.* iv.); and, as our Saviour reminds us, that "*without Him we can do nothing*" (*John* xv. 5; and St. Paul, inculcating the same maxim, tells us, "*we are not sufficient to think anything of ourselves, as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is from God*" (2 *Cor.* iii. 5): we must have recourse by constant and fervent prayer to the throne of grace, "*that speech may be given us, that we may open our mouth with confidence, to make known the mystery of the Gospel, for which we are ambassadors.*" (*Ephes.* vi. 19).

THE AUTHOR.

PART I.

ON THE APOSTLES' CREED.

PARTICULAR PREFACE
TO
PART I.

The First Series of Programmes comprises the Articles of the Apostles' Creed. The great mysteries of Religion presented in these Articles furnish matter for instruction, and are to be treated so far in didactic, style; whilst also they supply the strongest motives that can appeal to the human heart for emotional effect, and under this aspect they are matter for exhortation to be treated in Sermon style.

The Preacher is, therefore, to distinguish the two aspects of his subjects in each case so as to address himself to the understanding of his audience, so far as his matter is merely instructional; whilst he is to appeal to their feelings and affections in dealing with the motives or considerations conducive to pious emotion.

In the instructional part of his discourse he should aim at three principal conditions, namely, perspicuity, precision, and to make himself interesting.

To realize the first, which is obviously the most essential condition of instruction, he should take account of the audience he addresses, and adapt his language to their capacity. In doing so he is to select the most appropriate phraseology, and he will have not unfrequently to present the same ideas in different forms of language. Sometimes he will have to express himself positively, and sometimes negatively, stating what the matter is, and what it is not. At other times, he will find it useful to raise a question calling for a denial, in order to assert more emphatically what he has to affirm. The preaching of our Divine Lord furnishes frequent examples of this mode of instruction, as for instance, when speaking of St. John the Baptist, he asked, "*What went you out into the desert to see? A reed shaken with the wind? But what went you out to see? A man clothed in soft garments? Behold they that are clothed in soft garments, are in the houses of kings. But what went you out to see? A*

prophet?" He answers each question, by asking another, thus conveying a denial in a more emphatic form, in order to give enhanced effect to what He desires to affirm respecting the Baptist in the words following: "*Yea, I will tell you, and more than a prophet. For this is he of whom it is written: Behold I send my angel before thy face, who shall prepare the way before thee. Amen, I say to you,*" *&c.* (*Matt.* xi.)

St. Paul presents beautiful examples of this mode of speaking in several parts of his writings. In his Epistle to the Romans, he commences the sixth chapter by asking, "*What shall we say then? shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. For we that are dead to sin, how shall we live any longer therein?*" In the same way he asks in the eleventh chapter, "*I say then: Hath God cast away his people? God forbid, for I also am an Israelite,*" *&c.* The Apostle could have asserted in plain positive terms the matter he had to convey, but then his language would be much less energetic.

In the instructional part of his discourse the Preacher should avoid all involved and complicated sentences, which are always embarrassing to a promiscuous audience; and, whilst taking these precautions as to language, he must not be too much the Theologian, going into learned expositions above and beyond the capacity of his hearers.

He will find illustrations and comparisons sometimes very conducive to perspicuity. But they should be selected with care, and applied as far, and only as far, as they throw light on his subject.

In consulting for precision, the Preacher is simply to say enough, and only enough, to be distinctly understood. In this respect he should keep as near as his subject will admit to the terms of a logical definition or description. He should, therefore, avoid all redundancy of expression, and still more carefully all ambiguity of terms, leading to confusion or misapprehension. He is, in a word, to say what he means, neither more nor less.

In the third place, the Preacher should endeavour to make himself interesting. The ear is a most fastidious organ, and

seeks for pleasure even in the most didactic expositions. This pleasure is afforded, in a great degree, by attending to the rhetorical aphorism of the proper word in the proper place, so that, as far as possible, no substitution of terms, or change in their arrangement, could be made with advantage.

All hissing and grating sounds should be avoided, as also combinations of words difficult of utterance. Short sentences should be used with much discretion, as being liable to have an abrupt effect upon the ear, and, for the same reason, a succession of monosyllabic words, especially at the end of a sentence, should be guarded against. It would be useful for the Preacher, in preparing his discourse, to read aloud, even by himself alone, what he intends to deliver, in order that, by the experiment on his own ears, he may judge how far he is likely to afford interest to his hearers.

So far for the didactic or instructional part of the following subjects. The Preacher has next to consider the emotional matter they present, and how he is to handle it. The way is, in a considerable degree, already prepared, when the truth or mystery forming the subject of the discourse has been expounded in the clear, precise, and interesting manner we have just seen. The great truths of Faith possess of themselves a power of acting on the human mind with sensational effect, when clearly apprehended by the intellect, so that the task of enforcing motives and considerations, with a view to religious impression, is thereby comparatively facilitated. The Preacher has only to consider, as he goes along, the different affections his subject best calculated to excite, and address himself accordingly to them. He can do so in a variety of ways, by admonition, exhortation, entreaty, adjuration, expostulation, remonstrance, reproach, menace, &c., according to occasion; but more generally his appeals should be the promptings of a heart full of charity and zeal for his audience, beseeching them with the Apostle, "*by the mildness and modesty of Christ*" (2 *Cor.* x. 1), and "*entreating*

and comforting them, as a father doth his children" (1 *Thess.* ii. 11), so as to be able to say, "*God is my witness, how I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ.*" (*Phil.* i. 8).

The affections he will keep in view, to appeal to in the course of his discourse, should chiefly be compunction for sin, fear of God's justice, hope in His mercy, desire of amendment, and embracing a life of virtue and perfection, resignation, and conformity to God's holy will, gratitude for his mercy, self-reproach, renunciation of one's own will, a spirit of penance, zeal for the glory of God, charity towards the neighbour, &c. The more tender sentiment to be aimed at in pathetic appeals are, sorrow, piety, sympathy, vehemence, indignation, warmth, love, desire, joy, &c.

The Preacher of God's Word should constantly bear in mind, that he is on supernatural ground in treating the mysteries of Faith contained in the Apostles' Creed, and that, therefore, he is to endeavour, by all means, to lift up his audience above flesh and blood, above this material world, by exercising them in the supernatural virtues of Faith, Hope, and Charity, keeping them in mind, with the Apostle, that, "*we have not here a lasting city, but we seek one that is to come.*" (*Heb.* xiii. 14).

There is no precise order to be observed in appealing to the affections, nor is there any special place to be assigned for such appeals in the arrangement of the discourse. They are to be prompted by the motives and considerations the subject presents in the orderly treatment of it, interspersing them with the doctrinal explanations required throughout.

In the end, the Preacher shall sum up the doctrinal points of his discourse, to give, as it were, a synoptic view of the entire; as he should also recapitulate with earnestness and warmth, in the form of an exhortation, the various appeals he has made throughout, in order that they may be brought to bear with concentrated force upon the feelings, affections, and good purposes of his audience, producing thereby, with God's blessing, "*fruit unto sanctification, and the end life everlasting.*" (*Rom.* vi. 22).

APPROBATIONS

OF THE MOST REVEREND

THE ARCHBISHOPS AND BISHOPS OF IRELAND.

ARMAGH, 30*th May*, 1881.

VERY REV. AND DEAR FATHER,

I have to thank you very sincerely for the early copy you sent me of "Programmes of Sermons," etc. I have read enough of those volumes to see that the work is intrinsically a great one. It is the best work ever published in the English language for priests, young and old, to aid and guide them in preparing solid instructions for their flocks.

The work abounds with fresh, original, wise and beautiful thoughts taken from Holy Writ, and the teaching of the Church, arranged too in lucid order, so that no one can have difficulty in bringing home to the people the unchanging Truths of Religion.

The writer is a householder who bringeth forth out of his treasure, things new and old, with the practised training of a scholar, and an able Divine.

Why is your name omitted from the title page?

The great work is an honour to the Irish College, and reflects glory on the Irish Church, and the author should be known as the gifted son of St. Patrick, and another bright star in the firmament of the Irish Church.

With most grateful thanks and sincere esteem,

I am your faithful servant,

✠ DANIEL M'GETTIGAN.

4, RUTLAND-SQUARE, EAST
DUBLIN, 19*th May*, 1881.

MY DEAR FATHER,

Accept my thanks for your kindness in sending me an early copy of your "Programmes of Sermons and Instructions." I hope to see very valuable results for Religion from the publication of your most useful work. It does not cost our young preachers much trouble to be eloquent; but to be accurate and practical must be the result of close study, and careful writing. A very sensible and clever man once remarked to me, that until he sat down to commit his thoughts to paper, he imagined himself to be perfect master of the subject of his study: but when the "littera scripta" stood before him, he found that a return to his books was essential to accuracy. Your "Programmes" will be admirable aids to young preachers to write out with accurate detail their instructions for the people under their care; and if the labour of writing their sermons be not zealously attended to by young priests, every discourse will be a dissertation on everything "from the tree that is in Libanus unto the hyssop that cometh out of the wall," but not with the success that brought the people of all nations to the feet of Solomon.

Since the "solicitude" of the Church of Dublin has been cast on my weak shoulders, I have often been alarmed by the knowledge that a very large number of our people never receive a word of instruction in the Church, for the very simple reason that they studiously keep aloof from the public functions, when these instructions are delivered. To remedy this great evil it occurred to me, that it would be advisable to introduce the custom of having a short, simple and pithy discourse of five or six minutes' duration, after the Gospel of each Mass on Sundays. But, as you well know, it is by no means an easy task to arrange such instructions where there would be no room for eloquence, but great need of accurate and condensed information. In looking over your "Programmes of Sermons and Instructions," it struck me that they will suggest most effective means for enabling the clergy, young and old, to arrange practical though short instructions, which our people want, and which they will certainly appreciate.

It, therefore, gives me great pleasure to welcome your valuable work, and to wish for it the amplest success.

Believe me, yours sincerely,

✠ EDWARD, *Archbishop of Dublin.*

ST. JARLATH'S, TUAM,
May 19th, 1881.

MY DEAR FATHER,

Your volumes, "Programmes of Sermons and Instructions," have duly reached me, for which I beg you to accept my best thanks.

I have already read enough of these volumes to convince me that you have supplied a long-felt want in the Irish Church. They are the fruit of matured judgment, deep-seated piety, and a fervent desire of assisting and directing, in a proper manner, the labours of the Missionaries of the Faith in our well-beloved Country.

I trust that the clergy, young and old, will not fail to appreciate, as they deserve, your services in their regard, and of their flock.

I remain, very dear Father,

Very faithfully yours,

✠ JOHN, *Archbishop of Tuam.*

THE PALACE, THURLES.
June 2nd, 1881.

MY DEAR FATHER,

I write you this hurried line to thank you for the two valuable volumes which you were good enough to send me. I refer, of course, to your "Programmes of Sermons."

Owing to my absence from home and to a variety of other causes, I have not been yet able to look thoroughly through the "Programmes;" but I have nevertheless seen enough of them to convince me, that you have done a really good and needful work for young preachers, and, in fact, for all Ecclesiastics, who are engaged in the Sacred Ministry of the Word.

I shall promote the circulation of the "Programmes" in every way I can; and I hereby earnestly recommend them to the clergy of Cashel and Emly.

I am, my dear Father,

Your very faithful servant,

✠ T. W. CROKE, *Archbishop of Cashel.*

TUAM,
June 2nd, 1881.

MY DEAR FATHER,

Please accept my best thanks for the presentation copy, in two volumes, of your "Programmes of Sermons and Instructions," which I found before me on yesterday after some weeks' absence on visitation.

Having endeavoured to master its contents, I have to congratulate you on having brought out so useful and edifying a work in the midst of your arduous duties.

On seeing the notice of the work, I expected much, and I am glad to say my expectations are fully realized.

It is a repertory of interesting knowledge on the several subjects, Doctrinal, Moral, Ascetical, on which Pastors of souls are bound to instruct their people. The examples and illustrations found here and there in it, make the reading interesting and attractive. Those who have to break the bread of life to the "little ones," and dispense it in a manner suited to the capacity of their people, would do well to imitate its simple and lucid style.

No Priest coming on the mission should be without it, and the intelligent laity will be amply repaid by its perusal.

With very sincere regards,

Believe me, very sincerely yours.

✠ JOHN MACEVILLY.

COURCIES, *June 7th*, 1881.

MY DEAR DOCTOR,

My hands are very full of business, and I had not any time for the inspection of your work; a glance suffices to convince me of its value.

Yours very truly,

✠ WILLIAM DELANY.

DERRY,
May 20th, 1881.

VERY REV. DEAR SIR,

I beg to return warmest thanks for the copy of your valuable work, which I had the honour to receive by post.

For the present I shall only say, that I believe the book is just what it might be expected from the learned Author, and it will afford me sincere pleasure to recommend it to the clergy of this diocese.

I remain, Very Rev. dear Sir, faithfully yours,

✠ FRANCIS KELLY.

VIOLET HILL, NEWRY,
May 26th, 1881.

VERY REV. DEAR FATHER,

I read several pages of the "Programmes," which you kindly sent me, and I was much pleased with them. The instructions contained in them are solid and calculated to make a lasting impression, while the suggestions to preachers are sound and prudent. I hope the book will meet a wide circulation.

I am, Very Rev. dear Father,
With sincere esteem,
Yours in Christ,

✠ JOHN P. LEAHY,

CARLOW,
May 29th, 1881.

MY DEAR RECTOR,

I pray you to accept my thanks for your kindness in sending me a copy of the "Programmes."

I have read much of the work. It will be, in my opinion, highly useful, and I shall have much pleasure in recommending it to our clergy, as opportunity occurs.

I remain, my dear Rector,
Yours faithfully,

✠ JAMES WALSHE.

TULLOW, CO. CARLOW,
May 25th, 1881.

MY VERY DEAR CONFRERE,

Although you have not given the recommendation of your name to the very valuable and important work you have just given to ecclesiastics of all grades in the Sacred Ministry, a word about its Author from one, who has been closely connected with him from the very beginning of his ecclesiatical career to this day, may fairly be supposed to add some extrinsic value to his book. Head of the class, to which I had the happiness to belong, during your entire course in Maynooth, one of the first founders of the Congregation of the Mission in Ireland, for the greater part of your long life indefatigable in bestowing upon the Mission, in its foremost ranks, and upon your Confreres, who laboured with you, the rich benefits of your rare talents and great acquirements, and now, approaching the close of a life of incessant toil in the duties of the Sacred Ministry, engaged in imparting to the youthful aspirants to the Priesthood, the rich and ripe fruit of a hard-spent day in the Vineyard of the Lord, I know not what is wanting as a qualification for the success of the work you now offer to the Irish Priesthood. As far as my limited time has permitted me to look through the "Programmes," I find in them another added to the very many proofs I have witnessed through life of the great success of the unselfish and untiring labours of their Author.

Your devoted confrere in Christ,

✠ J. LYNCH,

Coad. Bishop of Kildare and Leighlin.

SLIGO, *May 24th.*

MY DEAR FATHER,

I am in receipt of the copy of your "Programmes of Sermons and Instructions," which you kindly forwarded to me, and I hasten to offer you my most grateful thanks for having produced a work so eminently useful. After carefully looking through it, I regard it as a signal benefit conferred on the Irish Church, and, indeed, on all priests who speak or understand the English language.

Much as I had expected on such a subject from your well-known zeal and long missionary experience, I rejoice to find that my hopes have been far surpassed, not only as regards the abundance and appropriateness of the matter supplied for Sermons and Instructions but also as to the form and style in which the matter is presented, and which in point of order, simplicity and dignity, appear to me in the highest degree deserving of praise and imitation.

The work is one that must be welcomed as a boon by every priest having charge of souls, and it may be safely predicted of it, that it will render the preaching of the Divine Word easy, attractive, and fruitful, and thus prove an inestimable blessing to pastors and flocks. I know my clergy will be anxious to procure the work as soon as it will be published; so will the great bulk of our Irish priests; and I have no doubt but it will be given henceforth, as a standard premium, in our National College of Maynooth, and in all our Ecclesiastical Seminaries, to Students in Theology.

That these volumes, the fruit of a long life of prayer, study, and missionary labour, may bring you the one reward you covet, by promoting largely the glory of God and the salvation of souls, is the earnest prayer of your devoted friend and attached confrere,

L. GILLOOLY, *C.M.*

VERY REV. DEAR FATHER,

Your "Programmes of Sermons and Instructions" I think worthy of high approbation. They will be most useful to the preachers of the Divine Word, and particularly to the younger clergy. I have the fullest confidence, that with God's blessing they will contribute much to "His greater glory and the salvation of souls."

Wishing your excellent work, therefore, a large circulation and every success,

I remain, Very Rev. dear Father,

Most sincerely yours in Christ,

M. FLANNERY, *Bishop of Killaloe.*

May 24th, 1881.

I HAVE to congratulate the Vincentian Fathers on the bringing out of a work carefully compiled, and sure to produce great advantages to their own Students, and to all Missionary Priests.

The "Programmes of Sermons" will prove an invaluable aid to preachers, fixing the mind on the subject of Instruction in accordance with the Catechism of the Council of Trent, and, at the same time, provoking the preacher to study his subject, so as to avoid the indolence of mere plagiarism, or the barren way of getting by heart. It is as near as possible perfect, and must be most useful to priests and people.

✠ P. DORRIAN, *Bishop of Down and Connor.*

THE PALACE, LIMERICK,
19*th May*, 1881.

DEAR FATHER,

Pray accept my best thanks for your excellent book, "Programmes of Sermons and Instructions," which you so kindly sent me. I have not been able, as yet, to read it through, but I have looked over it sufficiently to be convinced that it is a work of great merit and of great utility. I cannot doubt but it will prove a most valuable and welcome help to preachers, and to all whose duty it is to instruct the people in the doctrines and duties of religion; and for myself, I shall be most happy to introduce and recommend it to the clergy of Limerick.

Believe me to be, dear Father,
Your faithful servant in Christ,
✠ GEORGE BUTLER, *Bishop of Limerick.*

CULLIES HOUSE, CAVAN,
23*rd May*, 1881.

MY DEAR FATHER,

Your work entitled "Programmes of Sermons and Instructions," for which accept my best thanks, came duly to hand. The order and arrangement of matter in the book pleased me very much.

What I consider extremely useful in it are the references at the end of each instruction. To be told where you can lay your finger

on what you want is a great saving of time for the hard-worked priest. It is "preaching made easy."

I believe the book will be welcomed both by young men in colleges, and by older men already engaged in the great work of preaching the Word of God. I shall be happy to recommend it.

Believe me, very faithfully yours,

✠ NICHOLAS CONATY, *Bishop of Kilmore.*

DONORE, DROGHEDA
May 31st 1881.

MY DEAR FATHER,

I have not as yet seen the copy of your work which you have so kindly sent to Mullingar, as I have not been there since April last. I am out ever since on the visitations.

If I had read your work, and had time to study it attentively, nothing would give me greater pleasure than to write a carefully prepared review of it. But, unfortunately, this is my very busy season, and I have not one day, nor indeed one hour, free until about the 18th of July next. In the second edition of it, however, perhaps you might find a place for what I might have to say of it. At present I can only say that, to the best of my belief, all the Bishops of Ireland await the appearance of this work with the deepest interest, and in the highest hope that it will prove an incalculable gain to the Irish Clergy. Your splendid intellectual gifts, your vast and varied learning, and your unrivalled experience as a Missionary Priest for nearly fifty years, will all contribute their share to make this work an invaluable acquisition to the Ecclesiastical literature of our country. You are, of course, better known here in this diocese, where you have given so many missions, conducted so many retreats, and where, to my certain *personal* knowledge, your labours have produced so much fruit, than in any other part of Ireland, and hence the clergy here only await the opportunity to provide themselves with this work.

I heartily recommend it everywhere, and I have not a doubt that it will become universally popular.

Excuse this hurriedly written note, and believe me,

My dear Father, ever yours,

✠ THOMAS NULTY.

BISHOP'S HOUSE, MONAGHAN,
23rd May, 1881.

DEAR FATHER,

I have looked carefully over your book, and I consider it to be a most useful, as it was a most needful contribution to our ecclesiastical literature. These "Programmes" afford an easy means for the preparation of solid Sermons and Instructions on every theme that may have to be treated by a preacher in the course of the year, with variety enough, indeed, to cover several years. To the hard-working priest, who, after the week's duties, has little time left for preparing a sermon, you supply a ready *view* of his Sunday's discourse, with abundance of appropriate matter presented on the spot, and reference to much more to be found elsewhere, adding suitable reflections and practical resolutions to be suggested by the preacher in connection with the subject. Though your language is absolutely faultless, and at once simple, dignified, and flowing, the skeleton nature of these Programmes will save the preacher from the danger of committing mere words to memory, and force him to express the ideas in his own natural style. This I regard as a great advantage.

Among your claims to the gratitude of the Irish Church, and they are many, this book will be found to furnish one of the strongest. I believe it, in fact, to be, for our clergy, perhaps the most valuable work that has appeared for many years.

Praying you may be long spared to the Irish Church, and to the great institution which you so wisely govern,

I remain, dear Father,
Very sincerely yours,
JAMES DONNELLY.

LOUGHREA, *May 23rd.*

MY DEAR FATHER,

In acknowledging the receipt of "Programmes of Sermons and Instructions," I cordially approve of the object you have in view in publishing them.

The clergy will find them simply invaluable in preparing instructions for their flocks. I earnestly hope they will command the extensive circulation they so well merit.

I am sincerely yours in Christ,
✠ PATRICK DUGGAN.

BALLINA, CO. MAYO, IRELAND,
May 21st, 1881.

VERY REV. DEAR FATHER,

I beg to thank you very sincerely for the two volumes of "Programmes of Sermons and Instructions," which you kindly sent me. From what I read of them, I believe that they are a work calculated to confer great advantage on Missionary Clergymen in preparing instructions for their people. The selection of the matter for instruction, the arrangement of its parts, and reference to the books that contain the best information on those subjects, must be a very great advantage to clergymen on the Mission, and facilitate for them the duty of collecting and preparing matter for useful instructions for their hearers. I shall earnestly recommend this work to my clergy.

Wishing you long life and good health to prosecute your very useful undertaking,

I am, Very Rev. dear Father, sincerely yours,
HUGH CONWAY, *Bishop of Killala.*

THE ABBEY, BALLAGHADERIN,
29*th May*, 1881.

MY DEAR FATHER,

I have been looking forward with much interest to the publication of your admirable work.

You have rendered a most important service to the Irish Church, and to the English-speaking clergy in general, by your "Programmes of Sermons and Instructions."

With singularly good judgment you have so arranged your system, that whilst the young Priest follows your style of preaching, he must not descend into the servile *role* of a mere copyist. He is left scope for the exercise of industry and ingenuity, as well as range for his talent. He has also your judicious selections of authors to assist him in filling up the outlines so skilfully sketched for him. In fact, your plan makes preaching so easy, that young priests, who with such helps would neglect the duty of instructing, are simply inexcusable

The will only should be wanted ; you have clearly pointed out the way.

Scarcely less useful will be found your "Exposition of Christian Doctrine" appended to the "Programmes," which is invaluable to those charged with the duty of giving Catechetical instruction.

In approving your excellent work, and recommending it to the clergy of this diocese, I beg to thank you most heartily for the devoted zeal and self-sacrifice which enlisted your gifted pen in this field of literary labour, and which afford ample proof of your abiding affectionate interest in the welfare of our dear Irish Church.

I remain, my dear Father,

Yours very faithfully,

✠ F. J. MacCormack, *Bishop of Achonry.*

KILKENNY, *7th June*, 1881.

DEAR SIR,

I have to thank you for the two volumes of "Programmes of Sermons and Instructions," which came to hand a few weeks ago. I have read a considerable portion of both volumes, and it seems to me that the "Programmes" are remarkably clear and practical.

This work will prove a valuable addition to our Ecclesiastical literature, and will, I trust, find its way into the hands of very many of our devoted clergy.

Believe me to remain, your faithful servant,

✠ Patrick F. Moran, *Bishop of Ossory.*

WATERFORD, *June 15th*, 1881.

MY DEAR FATHER,

I am thankful for the copy you have favoured me with, of your two volumes of "Programmes of Sermons and Instructions, and Exposition of Christian Doctrine." From what I have read of the work, I consider it a most valuable aid to all Missionary Priests, and most especially to young Priests entering upon their Missionary career, in preparing for the efficient discharge of the duty of the "Ministry of the Word." The work exhibits evident marks of careful study, deep research, and extensive knowledge on all sacred subjects that supply matter for the instruction of the people, whilst its method of treating each subject is remarkably clear and lucid, and adapted to the intelligence of ordinary capacities. It will give me great pleasure to encourage the circulation of the "Programmes" amongst the Clergy of my Diocese.

I remain, my dear Father,

Yours very sincerely,

✠ J. Power, *Bishop of Waterford.*

ENNISCORTHY, *May 23rd*, 1881.

MY DEAR FATHER,

I have received your two volumes of the "Preaching Programmes," &c., for which accept my best thanks. I have no doubt they will be found very useful. They would have been so to me, if I had had the good fortune to possess them at the commencement of my priestly career. I shall have an opportunity of introducing them to the notice of all our Priests at our next Conference early in the month of June.

I remain, my dear Father,
Yours very truly,
✠ M. WARREN.

SKIBBEREEN, *May 22nd*, 1881.

MY DEAR FATHER,

I beg to thank you very much for the two volumes of the "Programmes of Sermons and Instructions," which I have duly received. I have looked over both volumes with some care, and I feel perfectly satisfied they will prove to be of great and lasting usefulness not only to the Students of the venerable Irish College, for whom they are specially intended, but also to all engaged in the duties of the Sacred Ministry. I need not say that, for my part, I will feel it a duty equally as a matter of sincere pleasure to do what I can in recommending so valuable a work to the clergy of the diocese of Ross.

I remain, Very Rev. and my dear Father,
Yours very faithfully and sincerely in Christ,
✠ WM. FITZGERALD.

THE PALACE, KILLARNEY, *June 4th*, 1881.

I thank you very much for the copy you have sent me of your valuable work. It is perfectly true to its title "Programmes of Sermons and Instructions," and suggests most useful and practical hints to missionary priests.

Would it not be possible to improve the book by adding a short index?

I remain, your most obliged and faithful servant,
✠ D. MCCARTHY.

ST. MEL'S CATHEDRAL, LONGFORD,
22*nd May*, 1881.

MY DEAR FATHER,

Permit me to thank you for your kindness in sending me a copy of your admirable "Programmes of Sermons and Instructions." I have no doubt that this work will be most useful, especially to our young Priests, and I shall deem it my duty to recommend it to the clergy of this diocese at our approaching Retreat. The fifth part, the Exposition of the Christian Doctrine will, I think, be found specially useful. I remember still, after many years, being most forcibly struck by the explanation of the Catechism, made by a saintly member of your Congregation, who was subsequently Bishop of this diocese, the late Right Rev. Dr. McCabe; and the spirit of St. Vincent de Paul, which breathed so well in his discourse, still lives in your work, and will, I am sure, make many a youthful minister of the Altar take to himself the words, which St. Vincent loved so truly, and so practically: "Evangelizare pauperibus misit me." May God grant this blessing to your new work.

Believe me to be, my dear Father,
With sincere respect and esteem,
Very affectionately yours in Christ,
✠ BARTH. WOODLOCK,
Bishop of Ardagh and Clonmacnoise.

LETTERKENNY,
June 18*th*, 1881.

MY DEAR FATHER,

Your "Programmes of Sermons and Instructions" supply a want long felt in this country, by all who are intrusted with the important duty of instructing the people. The poverty of our language in works of this kind has made young preachers entirely dependent, for the matter and form of their discourses, on highly

finished sermons, which are often ill suited to the natural gifts of the speaker, oftener still to the capacity and special needs of his audience. The use of such sermons, either as models or sources of matter, is often destructive of originality, simplicity, earnestness, and that complete sympathy of the speaker with the feelings and wants of his audience, without which even a carefully prepared discourse is more likely to weary than to interest and impress.

There is another evil too for which you have supplied a most effectual remedy. Too much attention has been paid to the passing impressions produced by exhortation, too little to the deep and lasting conviction produced by careful instruction. This defect springs from a cause which few acknowledge even to themselves, the greater difficulty of preparing an instruction. You have removed this excuse by furnishing a complete course of skeleton instructions so suggestive and so admirable arranged as to enable the preacher, with a little reading and a little thought, to produce a clear, solid, interesting discourse on any of the leading doctrinal or moral subjects.

In addition to the temporary assistance which your "Programmes" give the young preacher in preparing his discourses, they will induce a habit of mind which is invaluable, training him to a careful selection and a clear and judicious arrangement of his matter. The opportunity which I have had, for many years, in the Irish College, of observing the effect which these "Programmes," even in their rough and unfinished state, produced on the exercises of the students, made me wish to see the advantages which they afforded extended more widely among students and priests on the mission. In the volumes before me I see this wish accomplished, even beyond my highest expectation. I can therefore sincerely congratulate you on having done a great work for the good of religion, and having done it well. By warmly recommending your book to the clergy of this diocese, I shall promote, as far as I can the only object which you proposed to yourself in its composition, the spiritual welfare of the people.

I am, Dear Father,

Yours most faithfully,

MICHAEL LOGUE.

QUEENSTOWN,
June 29th, 1881.

MY DEAR FATHER,

Absence from home on the visitation of my Diocese prevented me from thanking you sooner for the two volumes of "Programmes of Sermons," which you so kindly sent me as a presentation copy. The same cause has also hitherto prevented me from reading them through. I have, however, glanced over them for the purpose of enabling me to form some opinion of their merits, and even this cursory glance has sufficed to show me that you have accomplished a work of great practical utility, and one which cannot fail to be of the greatest service to our hard-worked Missionary Priests, who, because of the multiplicity and variety of their ordinary duties, have not always as much time as would be desirable to devote to the preparation of their sermons.

Whilst insisting very properly on the necessity of study for this purpose, your volumes have done much indeed to shorten the time and lighten the labour of such study, by the copiousness and variety of the materials they supply on the various subjects treated of, which include the entire range of Pastoral teaching; by the simple, natural, and logical order in which these materials are arranged; and what is of still more value to the Preacher, considering the sacred character of the duty he discharges—the exposition and elucidation of the Word of God—by the great number and variety of appropriate texts of Scripture with which they supply him, or to which they refer him. How much this latter tends, not alone to impart a high religious tone to Pastoral discourses, but also to shorten the time necessary for their preparation, those only who have had experience of the delay occasioned by the search for such texts can properly estimate. On the whole then, I congratulate you most sincerely on the valuable service you have rendered to religion, and the new title you have established to the gratitude of your brother Priests, by the publication of your latest, and I have no hesitation in saying, your best work.

I am, very dear Father,

Yours most sincerely,

✠ JOHN MACCARTHY.

PRELIMINARY DISCOURSE

ON

THE APOSTLES' CREED.

"*Going therefore, teach ye all nations.*"—MATT. xxviii. 19.

INTRODUCTION.

AFTER His resurrection, our Divine Lord remained yet forty days on earth appearing several times to His Apostles, and when He was about to withdraw His visible presence from amongst them, He gave them the world-wide commission contained in the words of our text: "*Going therefore, teach ye all nations.*" Accordingly they prepared to fulfil this great mission; but, before separating, they agreed upon a Symbol of Faith, composed of the principal truths they had learned from their Divine Master. This Symbol consisted of twelve articles, corresponding with the number of the Apostles, and was, on that account, as also because it was arranged by the Apostles, called the Apostles' Creed.

Purposing to give a series of discourses on these articles, I deem it useful to make some reflections beforehand, by way of introduction to so important a course of instructions.

[Invite Attention and offer up a few words of invocation.]

BODY OF THE SUBJECT.

Reflections.

First Reflection.—On the magnitude of the mission confided to the Apostles, and their unfitness for it, in a human point of view; how, nevertheless, they undertake it, relying on the assistance of Him who sent them, dividing amongst themselves, as if for conquest, the various parts of the inhabited world. Philip going to Phrygia, Bartholomew to the Greater Armenia and India, Matthew to Ethiopia and Persia, Thomas to Parthia, Medea, and part of India, Simon to Africa, Jude to Mesopotamia and Lybia, Matthias to Ethiopia, Andrew to Epirus, Achaia, and Scythia, James the Greater to Spain, James the Lesser to

stay in Jerusalem, John to Asia-Minor, Peter to Antioch, and thence to Rome, which, through him, was to become the Supreme Seat of Christianity, the Mother and Mistress of all Churches.

[Add a few words on what may be supposed to have been their sentiments on taking leave of each other for their various destinations.]

Second Reflection.—On the prejudices they had to surmount: first, on the part of the Jews and then of the Gentiles. Quote 1 *Cor.* i. 23, and enlarge.

Third Reflection.—On the universal depravity of mankind at the time: how vice was regarded as virtue, even so as to be placed under tutelary divinities, &c., &c.

Fourth Reflection.—On the false philosophy and reigning idolatry of the period.

Fifth Reflection.—On the foreknowledge they had of all these difficulties, having been already apprised of them by their Divine Master. Quote *Matt.* x. 16, *John* xv. 18, &c., *John* xvi. 2, &c.

N.B.—After each of these difficulties, ask in varying language, how could men so unfit for such a task, overcome them? and answer, that it was only by the Divine assistance they could succeed, thereby displaying the Divine character of their mission.

Sixth Reflection.—On the courage with which the Apostles faced all these difficulties, &c. "*Not counting their life more precious than themselves*," *&c.* (*Acts* xx. 24); (*Acts* iv., v., vi.); (2 *Cor.* xi. 25, *et seq.*); (*Heb.* xi. 35, *et seq.*), as applicable to the Apostles, and first Christians, in the same way as to the Prophets, all the Apostles sealing their faith with their blood, except St. John, who escaped only by miracle, having been cast into a caldron of boiling oil, and their successors in the ministry, with their converts, spilling their blood as water for 300 years.

[Enlarge on the rigour of the persecutions during that long period.]

Seventh Reflection.—On the success of the Apostles, and final triumph of Christianity, so that St. Paul, in his Epistle to the Romans, written only twenty-four years after they had entered on their mission, was able to say, that "*their sound hath gone forth into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the whole world.*" (*Rom.* x. 18). And St. Justin in the second century

could boast, as Tertullian in the third, in their celebrated Defences of the Christian Religion, that the Christians had become so numerous that they were everywhere throughout the Roman Empire, spread, as it was nearly over all the then inhabited nations of the globe, in the villages, in the country, in the army, in the navy, in the senate, and even in the emperor's own palace; "the blood of the martyrs becoming," according to the memorable words of Tertullian, "the seed of new Christians."

Thus triumphed, against all the efforts of earth and hell, the Creed of the Apostles, and thus were accomplished the words of St. John, "*This is the victory which overcometh the world, our faith,*" (1 *John* v. 4)—the faith comprised in the Apostles' Creed.

This rapid propagation of the Christian Religion by instruments so weak against difficulties so great, is justly regarded as an irrefragable argument of its divinity. St. Augustine presents it in the following manner: "To change the face of the universe; to convert, without force or violence of any kind, to the Christian Religion, persons of every age, sex, and condition, old and young, rich and poor, learned and unlearned, and this with immense sacrifices on their part, at the expense of their goods and loss of their lives, amidst torments the most cruel; to establish the foundation, to promote the extension, and secure the continuance of this religion in spite of the resistance of Princes, the opposition of the wisest men of the world, and the contradiction of the passions of human nature—to do all this, did the Apostles and first Pastors of the Church perform miracles? Yes, or no? If yes, that is, if they performed miracles, then the Christian Religion is divine, proved to be so by these miracles. If no, that is, if they performed no miracles, then I would ask, would not the conversion of the world without miracles by such instruments against such opposition be in itself the greatest of all miracles, stamping thereby on the religion of Christ the most undeniable mark and seal of its Divinity?"

Conclusion.

Conclude by inviting the audience to praise and bless God for the display of His Omnipotence in the propagation and triumph of Christianity, and thank Him for the blessing of the true faith. Add respecting Ireland, how she embraced the faith with scarcely any resistance, and without the shedding of martyrs' blood; and how she

has not only preserved it through the most dire persecutions, but even fulfils an apostolic destiny throughout the whole world, sending her children, with her bishops, priests, monks, and nuns, everywhere to propagate it.

N.B.—Keep in view throughout, the weakness of the instruments, and the strength of the opposition to be overcome, in order to show the assistance of the Most High, who in His wisdom, "*made choice of the foolish things of this world to confound the wise*," &c. (1 *Cor.* i. 27, *et seq.*)

Consult "Religion Treatise on the rapid propagation of the Christian Religion as a proof of its Divinity:" Catechism of the Council of Trent on the Creed, and M. Guillet's "Projets d'Instructions," vol. 1. Inst. viii.

FIRST DISCOURSE ON THE FIRST ARTICLE OF THE APOSTLES' CREED.

THE EXISTENCE OF GOD, AND THAT THERE IS BUT ONE GOD.

"*I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of Heaven and Earth.*"

Introduction.

Refer to the previous subject, recapitulating—1st. The great difficulties the Apostles had to contend with in teaching the truths contained in the Creed, and their unfitness, humanly speaking, for such a task. 2ndly. Their wonderful success notwithstanding: **whence infer** the action of God's power making use of such instruments according to the rule of His Providence, "*choosing the foolish things of the world to confound the wise*," *&c.* (1 *Cor.* i. 27, *et seq.*)

Go on to say—That from those general views of the Creed you will proceed to treat of the several articles of which it is composed, beginning with the first article announced in your text, which repeat, "*I believe*," *&c.*; after which observe, that although this article is comprised in very few words, it is, however, very ample in meaning, and furnishes matter for several discourses; but that you will for the present confine yourself to that portion of the article contained in these words, "*I believe in God.*"

[Add a word or two on the importance of the subject, and invoke a blessing,]

Body of the Subject.

Premise the following observations.—1st. That the words "*I believe*," though expressed only twice in the recital of the Creed, are, however, to be understood before each of the twelve articles. 2ndly. That they express our assent and consent to the truths announced in these articles, and our acceptance of them as most certain and indubitable. 3rdly. That the words "*I believe*," are to be understood as comprising the motive of our belief, which is the veracity of God, as much as to say:—"I believe each and every article, because they all come from Thee, O my God, who cannot deceive or be deceived." 4thly. That the words "*I believe*," engage also the affections of the heart in holy reverence for the authority of God's word in each of these articles.

Having thus placed before our mind what is meant by the words "*I believe*," in announcing the first article of the Creed, the article expresses what we are to believe, saying—"*in God.*" God is, therefore, what we are to believe in this first article of the Creed; *i.e.*, we are to believe, 1st. That there is a God, and 2ndly. That there is but one God.

There is a God, or God exists.

In telling us there is a God, or that God exists, religion means to teach simply, in the first instance, that there is a Being above all other beings—a Being from whom, and by whom, all other beings came into existence, and by whom they are all sustained and governed—a Being, in fine, who, in the words of the Catechism, "is the Creator and Sovereign Lord of Heaven and Earth, and of all things."

Proceed to say—Heaven and Earth, and all things proclaim the existence of such a Being, and present in order the four proofs of the existence of God, namely—1st, From the existence of contingent beings. 2ndly, From the order of the visible universe. 3rdly, The consent of mankind; and 4thly, God's own revealed Word.

The first two proofs may be treated as follows:—

First Proof.—It is a fundamental principle admitted by all mankind that every effect has a cause, and that there is no effect without a cause. Show a man a picture; it never occurs to him that it came into existence of itself, or that it was produced by chance. Show a watch to a man, who never saw a

watch before. Though he never before saw such a thing, yet he cannot help thinking, that it must have been made, and put together by some one. Now it is in this way, by this necessary argument, that the visible world, and all the things we see in it, point to a First Cause that made them. We look around us, and gaze on the hills and valleys, the mountains and the plains—we look upon the trees and the shrubs, the grass and the growing crops—we observe the living creatures in such numbers and varieties, we lift up our eyes on high, and see, and admire the sun, moon, and stars. Do not all these objects, so great, so various, and so wonderful, proclaim to us a First Cause, to which they owe their existence? Let us examine matters a little in detail; let us begin with ourselves. We know we have not made ourselves, and that we are a passing generation, like the generations that have gone before us—that we are but a link in the chain which has come down from the beginning. Let us follow up the chain till we arrive at the first link, that is, the first man. How did he come into existence?—how did he appear on this earth's surface? Undoubtedly there must have been a First Cause distinct from himself. Thus does the existence of mankind at large, and of every human being in particular, bear testimony to a First Cause, the cause of their being. We may apply the same reasoning to all living creatures—the fowls of the air, the fishes of the sea, and the various animals that roam the earth's surface. The present generation like the past generations is only a link in the great chain, by which these various beings are descended from some First Parent according to their respective kinds. Let us then ask the question, how these First Parents came into existence? They did not produce themselves. There were none of their kind previously to produce them. How then did they come into existence? There is no answering the question except by having recourse to a First Cause distinct from themselves to account for them. Thus do all living creatures, the birds of the air, the fishes of the deep, the beasts of the forest and fields, join mankind in proclaiming the existence of a First Cause as their Sovereign Maker.

And when we look up to the firmament and behold that countless host of heavenly bodies shining down upon us, &c., who could think they came there by chance, that they created themselves, or were created by each other? They all unite in

announcing a common origin derived from a Being distinct from themselves, their First Cause, from which they were all produced. Who then is this First Cause?—the Author of all we see around us in this visible universe? All languages give Him a name—a name signifying the same thing—what we mean by the name *God*. Thus it is that God has written His name on all beings of this world, to proclaim the great truth—they have not made themselves, but He it was who made them.

Second Proof.—And whilst the visible objects of the universe proclaim the existence of a First Cause, from which they all have proceeded, we have this argument wonderfully confirmed by the marvellous order and arrangement we behold, not only in the general structure of the universe, and connection of its several parts, but in the particular structure of every object, however great or small, that it contains, and the means and ways with which they are provided to attain their several ends.

Returning upon the example of the watch, say: Give it into the hands of one who never saw such an object before. He admires its works; he sees how they depend on each other, and how they co-operate in harmony for the end in view. He then says that not only was the watch made by somebody, but that the maker gave proof of inventive skill and power of combination in devising so many works, putting them together, and securing by their arrangement and combined action the effect he had in view, &c. If, from the consideration of a watch, we take account of the great works man is capable of accomplishing by the aid of steam, electricity, and other agencies of nature, we wonder at the ingenuity and intelligence displayed in these various works by sea and land. But great and wonderful though these productions of the human mind are, what are they to the wonders displayed to us in the works of nature, as we call them? Take into your hands the smallest insect, extinguish in it the life it possesses, and all the art of man will not be able to restore it. Summon together all the philosophers, all the engineers, all the men of genius, that ever existed, and ask them to restore life to that little insect; they will at once reply—*impossible.* All the resources of steam, electricity, and chemistry, are unavailing, nay, they cannot even restore to it a leg or a wing, that you have pulled off the little thing. What then, if we behold displayed in this little creature a power, a skill, and intelligence immeasurably superior to all the power, skill, and ingenuity of man, what are we to say of the plan,

order and arrangement of the great fabric of the visible universe? Let us lift up our eyes on high. Let us consider those worlds of worlds, that are displayed to our view—some stationary—some in motion—of immeasurable bulk—at incalculable distances, yet all in connection with, all in dependence on, each other from generation to generation—what power, what intelligence in the great Cause that gave them existence, that arranged them in such marvellous order, and imposed laws and government upon them, by which they all, from end to end, so gently yet so irresistibly carry out the purpose of the great system, which they combine to form, and in which each performs its own special function. At such a spectacle the mind is lost in admiration, and we can only exclaim with the Psalmist, "*Thou art great and dost wonderful things: Thou art God alone*" (*Ps.* lxxxv. 10).—Thou, who art the author of such harmony, order, and plan, in the works great and small of this vast visible universe. Thus does God reveal Himself again to us in the works of His hands—in their immense variety from the stupendous creations of the firmament to the very worm that crawls along the surface of the earth. How beautifully does the great St. Augustine express his thoughts on the works of creation in one of his Soliloquies: "Thy omnipotent hand, O Lord," says he, "is always the one and the same—the one and the same that created the angels in heaven and the worms upon the earth. Thou art neither greater nor less in the former than in the latter; for, as no other hand than Thine could create an angel, so no other hand than Thine could create a worm; and as no other hand could create the Heavens, so could no other create the smallest leaf on the tree; and as no other could create the body, so could no other make a single hair black or white. Nor is it an easier possibility for Him to create the worm than to create an angel; nor is it more impossible for Him to stretch out the heavens than the leaf, nor a lesser thing for Him to form a single hair on our heads than to form the whole body. But He made all things that He wished, and as He wished in heaven and on earth, in the sea and in every abyss, and amongst them He made me in the manner He wished, and could, and knew. Thy hand, O Lord, *could* have made me a stone or a bird, or a serpent, or any brute animal; but it *knew* its work, and it would not give me such a form owing to its infinite bounty; and if I am not a stone, or a tree, or some brute beast, it was because Thy great

goodness hath so determined, and so ordained, as there were no pre-existing merits of mine to deserve anything of Thee."—*Soliloquy* ix.

St. Paul, writing to the Romans, upbraids the pagan philosophers for endeavouring to obscure this great truth, saying "*The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and injustice of those men that detain the truth of God in injustice; because that which is known of God is manifest in them. For God hath manifested it unto them. For the invisible things of Him, from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made: His eternal power also and divinity: so that they are inexcusable.*" (*Rom.* i. 18, *et seq.*) That is to say, though God be invisible Himself, He, nevertheless, shows Himself in His works—the works we behold in the visible world, so as to leave no excuse to any man, who would deny or doubt His existence, power, or divinity.

Third Proof, from the universal consent of mankind.

N.B.—In treating this and foregoing proofs, avoid the air or appearance of controversy, as addressing an audience prepared to acknowledge God in the works of His hands, and to praise Him and magnify Him in all His creatures. Add expressions to this effect in closing each proof, which you will find in the Psalms, and especially in Pss. 18, 47, 102, 103, 116, 148, 150.

Fourth Proof, from God's own revealed Word.

Having disposed of the first three proofs you can say, that by them we are borne aloft, and presented before the throne of the Supreme Being Himself, to hear from his own lips the testimony He gives of Himself, and of His own existence. Here quote and paraphrase the words "I AM WHO AM" (*Exod.* iii. 14), to which add from *Job* xxxviii.

There is but one God.

So far we have been considering the words, "*I believe in God*," insomuch as they teach us there is a God, that is, a Supreme Being, from Whom, and by Whom, all other beings have come into existence, and by Whom also they are all maintained in the existence He has given them.

We now proceed to notice that this Supreme Being is but ONE, that is, that there is but one God.

Here give proof—1st, from reason, as in the treatise on metaphysics; 2ndly, from revelation in the style above indicated under the 3rd proof of the existence of God.

Quote *Deuteronomy* vi. 4; *Ps.* lxxxv. 10; *Wisd.* xii. 13; *Matt.* iv. 10;

Mark xii. 32; 1 *Cor.* viii. 4; Athanasian Creed; "*Non tres dii sed unus est Deus*;" observing that all revelation speaks of God as being *one*, essentially *one*; and *one* in opposition to the pagans, who fancied the existence of more gods than one.

Conclusion.

Conclude by exhorting your audience to frequent acts of faith, reverence, and love towards God, as the Being of beings, the Supreme Lord and Master of the universe, without equal, as being necessarily and essentially one, to Whom all creatures bear testimony, &c. Admire and adore Him in His creatures, thus giving a voice to all His works, according to the Psalm "*Benedicite*," in Lauds.

Consult Theology, "De Deo," Treatise on Metaphysics, Guillet's "Projets d'Instructions," vol. 1, xii. "Catechisme de la Persévérance," par M. Gaume, vol. 1. "Catechism of the Council of Trent on the Creed."

SECOND DISCOURSE ON THE FIRST ARTICLE OF THE APOSTLES' CREED.

THE WORK OF THE SIX DAYS.

"*I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of Heaven and Earth.*"

Introduction.

In our last discourse we ascended from earth to heaven, from the visible universe to its great Author and Sovereign Lord, and saw, according to the teaching of the Apostle, how "*the invisible things of Him, from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made: His eternal power also and divinity*," so that we should be inexcusable did we not recognise God in the works of His hands (*Rom.* i. 20). Therefore, the contemplation of the visible world conducts us to the throne of the Most High, to lay down at His feet the homage of our faith in Him as the Creator of heaven and earth, and all things, having no equal nor rival, being necessarily and essentially one. And having thus ascended from earth to

heaven, we come back again to this lower world, to behold in the present instruction the Omnipotent Creator at work in producing this wondrous fabric of creation which we have constantly exposed to our view here below.

[Some words on the importance of the subject. Invite attention and invoke a blessing.]

Body of the Subject.

I. *Preliminary statement.* Explain the meaning of creation, illustrating the definition by a contrast with things made or produced from other things, quoting *Rom.* iv. 17, "*who calleth those things that are not, as those that are.*" Give an example or two, and point out, that all God's works have a created origin, being partly created immediately, or partly formed from things He had already created. Whence proceed to observe that God Himself gives us an account of His work in bringing this visible world into existence, and would make us spectators in a manner of His Omnipotence in the great scenes he places before our eyes by His servant Moses. Present each day's work as in the first chapter of Genesis—stating, 1st, its previous non-existence; 2ndly, describing *the act* of its production; 3rdly, depicting its production *in fact*, adding expressions of admiration, &c.

2ndly. In speaking of the stars, distinguish between fixed stars, planets, and comets, describing each. Speak of the sun, his distance from the earth, ninety-five millions of miles; his diameter, over eight hundred and eighty thousand miles; that is, one hundred and twelve times greater than that of the earth, whose diameter is eight thousand miles. Yet, enormous though his bulk or size, the sun, as we are told by men of science, is but as a star like any one of the eighteen millions of stars in the vast *nebulæ* called the Milky-way, which is seen so distinctly in southern latitudes as an immense belt of stars encircling the heavens, and is only one of several other such *nebulæ*, or systems of stars farther distant, and as great as, or greater than, itself.

3rd. Mention the earth's motion in its annual course around the sun, at the rate of sixty-eight thousand miles an hour.

4th. State the distance of the nearest fixed star to be about twenty billions of miles, so far off, as that light, which travels at the rate of twelve millions of miles to the minute, would take three years and a half, at that rate, to reach the earth, whilst it is computed that the light of other stars more distant would take twenty, fifty, and some even seventy years to reach us. Nay, men of science would assure us that there are stars so far away, as that they would require ten thousand years to send a ray of light to us. Apply the words of *Baruch* iii. 9, 24, 33, 34, 35, 36, as if consecutive.

Conclusion.

Ask for what end did God create this wonderful fabric—this stupendous structure displayed in the work of the six days; and answer, first, for His own glory, the essential end of all His works: and secondly, for man's use and benefit. Therefore, exhbit man as the, lord and master under God of this nether world, quoting (*Gen.* i. 28, 29, 30), also (*Ps.* viii. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9).

[N.B.—In describing the various works of the six days, make the audience imagine themselves as if standing somewhere amidst the immense extent of space, and hearing the word of command coming from the mouth of God, and seeing the work immediately springing into existence. Mingle words of astonishment as you go along, keeping constantly in view the great Creator, Lord and Master of all.]

Consult Theology, "De Opere Sex Dierum;" "Catechisme de la Persévérance," par M. Gaume, vol. 1; "Projets d'Instructions," par M. Guillet, vol. 1. Inst. xiii.

THIRD DISCOURSE ON THE FIRST ARTICLE OF THE APOSTLES' CREED.

NATURE AND PERFECTIONS OF GOD.

"*I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of Heaven and Earth.*"

Introduction.

In treating of this article of the Creed we have seen that, *in the first place*, there is a God, and, *secondly*, that there is but one God, and that there cannot be more gods than one. Being thus placed, as we may say, face to face with God, we are naturally and irresistibly led to inquire who God is, and what is His nature?

Observe how this inquiry can never lead us to a complete knowledge of God, He being beyond the reach of all created intelligence, that, as the more we gaze upon the sun the more we are dazzled by its brilliancy, so also in our endeavours to fix the eyes of our mind on the great Creator of the world, we are overpowered, and in a manner blinded by the effulgence of His glory. Of this we are reminded in

the Book of Proverbs, xxv. 27, where it is said, "*A searcher of majesty shall be overwhelmed with glory.*"

Go on, however, to say, that though the great Creator and Ruler of the universe dwelleth, as the Apostle tells us, "*in light inaccessible, whom no man hath seen, nor can see*" (1 *Tim.* vi. 16), and the highest spirits in heaven cover their faces in His presence, being unable to withstand the effulgence of His glory, we should on that account be all the more desirous to know all we are capable of knowing by our reason and the light of faith of His divine nature and perfection.

[Invite attention and invoke a blessing.]

Body of the Subject.

First: God is a pure spirit.
Secondly: He is infinitely perfect.
Thirdly: He is eternal.
Fourthly: He is incomprehensible.
Fifthly: He is omnipresent.
Sixthly: He is omnipotent.
Seventhly: He is omniscient.
Eighthly: He is infinitely good.
Ninthly: He is infinitely just.
Tenthly: He is infinitely merciful.
Eleventhly: He is infinitely holy.
Twelfthly: He is infinitely true.
Thirteenthly: He is infinitely beautiful, &c.

[N.B.—Define each of these perfections, explaining the terms of the definitions, enlarging upon them and illustrating them by comparisons and contrasts, removing all that is imperfect, and amplifying all that is perfect in the subjects of comparison. Blend sentiments of admiration, benediction, congratulation, gladness, gratitude, humiliation, love, oblation, praise, &c.]

Conclusion.

Recapitulate and end by referring to the scene in the *Apocal.* iv. or *Isai.* vi. or *Daniel* vii.

Consult Theology, "De Deo;" also "Projets d'Instructions," par M. Guillet, xi. Inst.; Bishop Hay's "Sincere Christian," vol. 1, chap iv.; Catechism of Council of Trent on the Creed; "Meditations of St. Augustine," xxix. Med.

FOURTH DISCOURSE ON THE FIRST ARTICLE OF THE APOSTLES' CREED.

ON THE ANGELS.

"*I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of Heaven and Earth.*"

Introduction.

Moses, in his account of the creation and formation of the world, says, "*In the beginning God created heaven and earth,*" and the Apostles' Creed says, therefore, of God, that "*He is the Creator of heaven and earth.*"

The Nicene Creed, however, adds, "*and of all things visible and invisible.*"

Therefore, we are to look beyond this visible to an invisible world, the beings comprising which are equally the works of God's creative power. These invisible beings are the angels, the most noble of all God's works. We are, therefore, in our present discourse, to transport ourselves out of this region of visible and material objects, to enter into an unseen and invisible world, there to contemplate an order of things immeasurably superior to the works of creation, wonderful though they are, with which we are acquainted here below.

[Invite attention and invoke a blessing.]

Body of the Subject.

1st. What are the angels? Answer and explain the words "*spirits*" and "*pure,*" as being exempt from all material qualities, not only in composition, but in connection or association, differing in this respect from the human soul, which, though a spirit, is, in our present state, connected with our body.

2ndly. They are thought to have been created during the work of the six days, as forming part of the *same universe* with the works of God in this under world.

3rdly. Their number is beyond counting (*Dan.* vii. 10).

4thly. Describe their distinction into orders or choirs, and hierarchies, specifying them respectively.

5thly. All created in grace, with liberty to merit and demerit.

6thly. The greater part merited eternal happiness, and were

crowned with glory, whilst many of each order, it is thought one-third (*Apoc.* xii. 4), rebelled, and were cast into hell, then created for their punishment (*Isaias* xiv. 12, 13, 14); (2 *Peter*, ii. 4); (*Apoc.* xii.)

Take occasion here to inculcate a dread of sin from the punishment of the angels, arguing *a fortiori.*

7thly. Their employment in heaven.

8thly. Their missions and functions upon earth.

Examples of various missions (*Gen.* xlviii 16); (4 *Kings* xix. 35); (*Judith* xiii. 20); (*Isai.* xxxvii. 36).

Conclusion.

Inculcate devotion to the angels, stating they are our great friends with God, constantly interceding for us, going up to heaven to lay our wants at the foot of the throne of God, and bringing down His blessings to us as represented to us in the vision of Jacob's ladder. (*Gen.* xxviii.)

Consult Theology; "Projets d'Instructions," par M. Guillet, vol. 1, Inst. xv. 15; Butler's "Lives of the Saints," (8th May), (29th Sept.) (2nd Oct.); Gaume, "Catechisme de la Persévérance," vol. 1, ch. xiv., xv.; Bishop Hay's "Sincere Christian," vol. 1, chap. iv.; Catechism of Council of Trent on the Creed; Breviary, Feast and Octave of all Saints.

FIFTH DISCOURSE ON THE FIRST ARTICLE OF THE APOSTLES' CREED.

GUARDIAN ANGELS.

"*Are they not all ministering spirits, sent to minister for them who shall receive the inheritance of salvation?*"—(Heb. i. 14.)

Introduction.

We are here on earth in the midst of a two-fold world—a world of matter and a spiritual world. Both belong to the same universe under the dominion of the great Almighty Ruler who created them. One is not more real nor less real than the other; but we are so much engaged by the senses of our body with the material world, that we fail very generally in giving

equal attention to the spiritual world. It is through the soul, which is a spiritual substance, that we are made sensible of this world of spirits, and hold intercourse with the invisible beings who compose it. Amongst these beings, or more properly at their head, as their Lord and Master, is their great Creator, "*the King of ages*," as St. Paul styles Him, "*immortal, invisible, the only God, to whom they render honour and glory for ever and ever.*" (1 *Tim.* i. 17). In rendering Him this unceasing homage they are divided, as we have seen, into hierarchies and choirs in a regulated gradation, and, amongst the occupations and employments that are assigned them, some are appointed to be our guardians, to conduct us through this land of exile to the inheritance awaiting us in our true country, heaven, according to the words of our text, "*Are they not all ministering spirits*," *&c., &c.* We have said a few words incidentally of the "*ministering spirits*" in treating of the angels generally, but our connection with them as our special guardians deserves a particular discourse, in which we have much to consider, that interests us in the highest degree, as we look forward to the world to come. Our subject, therefore, is to be our Angels Guardian, or, as we may say otherwise, our Guardian Angels.

[A word or two to bespeak attention, and a short invocation.]

Body of the Subject.

1. *What faith teaches us respecting Guardian Angels.*

We have already seen that God in His all-bountiful Providence has appointed Guardian Angels in charge of countries and collective bodies of men, as the Archangel Michael had charge of the Jewish nation, and is at present the great protector of the Church of God. But just now we are concerned about the special Guardians placed in charge of each of us individually. On this point our faith teaches us, and we are bound to believe it as an article of our faith, that every individual in a state of grace has a particular angel to watch over him, and take care of him as his Guardian on the part of God. Besides this truth of faith, we are to hold as certain, according to the teaching of the most eminent divines, that even sinners, at least amongst the faithful, have, each of them, his or her Guardian Angel (Quote *Ps.* xc. ii.; *Ps.* xxxiii.; *Gen* xlviii. 16; *Judith* xiii. 20; *Matt.* xviii. 10; *Exod.* xxiii. 20, 21, 22).

Add quotations from holy Fathers, for which see Theology *De Angelis*. **Quote** especially St. Jerome, who says, "*How great is the dignity of souls, that each of us would have from our birth an angel specially deputed by God to take care of us.*"

Express admiration, representing the Almighty saying, at the birth of a newly-born infant, to one of His angels, one of His heavenly court—"Behold that infant. Descend into that world below, and take that little creature under your care. You will take care of it both as to soul and body, &c., &c." (Quote *Ps.* xc. 11, 12); quote also St. Bernard, *Lectio* iv. *off.: Angel. Cust. 2nd Oct. Angelis suis mandavit de te, mira dignatio, et vere magna dilectio charitatis! Quis enim, quibus, de quo, quid mandavit.* A word or two on each circumstance, and close the point with thanksgiving to God for so beneficent a dispensation of His Providence.

2. *The services our Guardian Angels render us.*

First. They preserve us from impending evils and dangers. (**Quote** *Gen.* xlviii. 16; 4 *Kings* vi. 17; xix 35; *Tob.* vi.)

Secondly. They hinder the demons or evil spirits from doing us harm (**Quote** *Tob.* viii. 3).

Thirdly. They suggest pious thoughts with the view of doing good and avoiding evil, (**Quote** *Exod.* xxiii. 31; *Gen.* xvi. 9; *Exod.* xxiii. 23; *Judith* xiii. 20; *Tob.* vi. 11; xii. 6).

Fourthly. They offer up our prayers for us, and join theirs with them. (**Quote** *Apoc.* viii. 3; *Tob.* iii. 25; xii. 12). They pray for us even when we are not aware of it, and when we offend the Almighty, in order to obtain for us the grace of conversion.

Fifthly. They do not lose sight of us in purgatory; and when souls have satisfied God's justice in that place of expiation, their Angels Guardian conduct them to heaven (*Luke* xvi. 22).

[N.B.—Observe, respecting the foregoing examples, that though they, or some of them, may not refer to our Angels Guardian precisely, they nevertheless afford an argument of inference to show what our Angels Guardian do for us. Observe also, that in these services they do not interfere with our own liberty of action, and they bear with us, as God bears with us when we abuse His graces.]

Sentiments of gratitude to God for His goodness in giving us such friends and protectors through life. Thanksgiving to our good Angels for their zeal and assiduity in the various services they afford us.

3. *Our duties towards our holy Guardians.*

These are summed up by St. Bernard into three observances, viz.: Reverence for their presence, devotion for their benevolence,

confidence in their guardianship. *In the first place* we owe them reverence for their presence. In order to fulfil this duty we must advert frequently to their presence. If we have an earthly friend going out and coming in along with us, and accompanying us wherever we go, we advert to his presence, yet he is not more present than our friend from heaven, who, according to the command of God, "*goes everywhere before us*," as clearing the way for us of all hindrances or dangers, so as to keep us in his holy keeping on our journey. (*Exod.* xxiii. 20). We are not only to reverence our own Angels as being always present with us, but the Angels of others as we meet them, or remain in their company. As we meet a fellow-being, we not only meet him, but his Angel likewise, and if we be in company with any number of persons, ten, twenty, or a hundred, we are in company with twice that number, that is, with themselves and their Angels Guardian. What a thought, and how little have we dwelt upon it! Perhaps we never let it into our minds at all, or, if we have, how seldom has it been! Hence St. Bernard would reproach us and say, are you so immersed in flesh and blood that you will not believe unless what you see, what you hear, what you smell, what you taste, what you touch, as if there were not other proofs of the presence of things which our bodily senses can give us no evidence of? These blessed Guardians belong to the spiritual world, and their presence is to be recognised through the evidence of Faith, according to the maxim of the Apostle, "*Faith is the evidence of things that appear not.*" (*Heb.* xi. 1).

Deplore the thoughtlessness of poor mortals, who, forgetting the presence of their heavenly companion, do in his presence what they would not do in the presence of their fellow-man, &c.

In the second place, we owe them devotion for their benevolence. Their benevolence is greater than that of father or mother. They can do for us, and they are always ready to do for us, more than father or mother can do. So great is their benevolence, that, when we are asleep, they keep watch by our bedside, and when men are so unfortunate as to offend their God, and the God of these blessed Spirits, they cease not to wish us well, and to help us out of sin, if we only give them our hand, that they may lead us forth, &c.

Finally, we owe them our confidence on account of their care

of us. This confidence is grounded, in the first place, upon their benevolence, which we have been just considering, and in the second place, on their great power. An army is as nothing before one of them.

Relate the instance of an angel slaying in one night one hundred and eighty-five thousand of the Assyrians. (*Isai.* xxxvii. 36.)

Conclusion.

Recapitulate and recommend some daily devotions in honour of our Guardian Angels, especially in the morning at morning prayers, and in the evening at evening prayers, on going from home and on returning, in all dangers and critical events of life, especially at the hour of death, hoping that they will present us before the judgment-seat of Christ as witnesses of our virtuous deeds, so far as we will have done well, and of our sincere repentance, so far as we will have done ill, on our passage in their company through our pilgrimage here below.

Consult as above, and "Soliloquies of St. Augustine," chap. xxvii.

SIXTH DISCOURSE ON THE FIRST ARTICLE OF THE APOSTLES' CREED.

THE FALLEN ANGELS.

"*I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of Heaven and Earth*"

Introduction.

Under this article of the Apostles' Creed we have treated of the Angels of God. We spoke of their nature; of their number, which is beyond number; of their distinction into orders or choirs and hierarchies. We saw how they were all created in grace, having at the same time liberty longer or shorter to merit or demerit, and how the greater part of them profiting of this time were crowned with glory, whilst a large number, it is supposed one-third, rebelled against their Creator, and were cast out of heaven. At this point our subject naturally divided, so as to engage us in considering the happy destiny of the

angels that remained faithful in the first instance, as we did in our last discourse, reserving the unhappy lot of the rebel angels for our present subject.

[Invite attention and make a short invocation.]

Body of the Subject.

1. The rebel angels were deprived by their rebellion of the grace and supernatural gifts, in which they were created, were forthwith expelled from heaven, and cast into hell, which was at the same moment called into existence for their punishment. Our Divine Lord, speaking of Satan, their leader, says — "*I saw Satan like lightning falling from heaven*" (*Luke* x. 18), and St. Peter speaking of the entire host says (Quote 2 *Peter* ii. 4, and *Jude* 6).

They are called devils, or demons, or evil spirits, or spirits of wickedness, and Satan, their accursed leader in their rebellion, is otherwise called Lucifer, or Belial, the Evil One, or Beelzebub, or, in a special way, the devil.

Though deprived of grace and their supernatural gifts in their fall, they yet retain their proper nature as spirits, a nature in itself superior beyond all measure to the nature of man. A terrific instance is given us of this in the history of Job. The devil had particular designs on this holy man, but could not touch him, or anything belonging to him, till God had permitted him for the trial and greater merit of His servant. But the moment the Lord had said to him, "*Behold I, all that he hath is in thy hand*," the devil went forth from the face of the Lord to execute his purposes of malice on Job. What is the result? Let us give it in Job's own words. (Quote *Job* i. 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19). Behold the work of a single night! In that one night, by the malice and power of the devil, that holy man is hurled all at once from the pinnacle of prosperity to the lowest depths of destitution. But yesterday, he was the master of seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, five hundred yoke of oxen, and five hundred asses, and to-day he has not a single four-footed beast to call his own! Yesterday, he had so many servants that the Scripture does not give the number, and only says it was exceedingly great; to-day there are but four remaining to bear him tidings of the great calamities that had happened. All the rest were slain. But his family—his

seven sons and three daughters—what of them?—these dear children, the light of his eyes, and the joy of his heart, for whom, and for each of whom, he offered sacrifice every morning—what about these dear ones? But yesterday, they were in the bloom of health—to-day, he is without son or daughter; so that finding himself, as it were, alone in the world, the holy man exclaimed, "*Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither.*" But how was the devil able to accomplish so much evil in one night, and in different and distant places? He not only calls to his aid hordes of robbers and plunderers, but he employs the lightnings and winds of heaven to perpetrate the works of his malice. What power! how terrific!—showing that even in his fallen state the devil and his evil spirits retain their angelic nature—a nature immeasurably superior to ours.

2. When they had fallen, God had resolved not to leave their thrones of glory to remain vacant in heaven, it being a principle of His bounty that He must not reach forth His hand in vain. He accordingly created another order of beings to occupy their places, and that order of beings, need I say, was mankind; yes, this is our happy destination to possess, &c.

3. The devil and his rebel companions continue their rebellion yet in will and desire, and also, as far as they can, in act and deed, endeavouring by all means in their power to rob God of His glory, and looking up to those seats of glory, of which they were deprived by their rebellion, they are penetrated with the most intense and ceaseless jealousy and envy against us mortals, seeing that we are destined to enjoy the thrones from which they have fallen. Hence a war, a deadly war, a ceaseless war against God, to rob Him of having us to sing His praises in their stead eternally in heaven, and at the same time a war against us also, to deprive us of this happiness.

4. For carrying on this war Satan maintains a regular kingdom or government, with an organised administration composed of his rebel associates, and having headed them in their rebellion in heaven he still heads them in their accursed war against God and man. It is supposed that some of the angels of all the orders or choirs in heaven were involved in the rebellion against God, and hence there are fallen angels, fallen archangels, &c., &c. (Enumerate the nine choirs.) According to these distinctions the empire of Satan is organised with its several departments

distributed in conformity with higher and lower grades of the fallen spirits. We can now understand how we speak of the devil as if *all* his work was done by himself, in the same way as we speak of the general of an army as if his victories were his own, although his officers and soldiers have generally more of the fighting to do than he, and we understand the words of the Apostle warning us to be upon our guard, because as he says, "*our adversary, the devil, like a roaring lion, goeth about seeking whom he may devour.*" (1 *Pet.* v. 8). He goeth about like the general of an army not ordinarily by himself, but what amounts to the same in effect, by those he has under him. &c.

5. Hell is the abode of the devil and his reprobate associates. (Quote 2 *Pet.* ii. 4). Nevertheless, to carry on their warfare with mankind, they are in the midst of us here on earth, and in numbers beyond all counting, and are spread over every part of the habitable world. Nay, they fly and flutter like birds of prey over our heads. Does not St. Paul tell us so? (Quote *Ephes.* vi. 12). It is even thought that, as there are good angels in charge of nations and kingdoms, and collective bodies of men, to guard them against evil and to do them good, so likewise are there infernal spirits holding similar commissions, but to do all the harm they can to the populations, of whom they have charge; nay, it is further thought by holy men that, as every individual has a Guardian Angel to protect him in this world, and to conduct him to everlasting bliss, so has he also the companionship of an evil spirit trying by all sorts of temptations to turn him off the narrow way, that leadeth to life, unto the broad road, that leadeth to everlasting death. It is to be observed that, though these spirits of wickedness are prowling about amongst us here on earth, they carry with them their hell wherever they go, and it is supposed that, by times, they exchange positions with each other, going back and forward between earth and hell, somewhat like the regiments or detachments of an army moving back and forward under the command of their general. In the end, however, they must all come forward, as St. Peter tells us, and appear before the great Conqueror, and receive from His mouth, in presence of the angels of heaven and all mankind, the solemn sentence of their condemnation, which is to consign them for all eternity to the fiery regions of hell, there to be themselves tormented for ever, and to torment at the same time the unhappy sons of men, whom they will have succeeded in leading to perdition.

6. From these explanations it follows, in the first place, that we are in a state of war, as holy Job warns us, and that war is unceasing, to end only with our lives. (**Quote** *Job* vii. 1). And this war is, as the Apostle tells us, not with flesh and blood, but with (**Quote** *Ephes.* vi. 12), that is: **Explain.** In the second place, each of us, you and I, and every son and daughter of Adam, will have to fight this fight himself, in his own person, hand to hand, foot to foot. Our Divine Lord would not exempt Himself, in order to teach us that we must not expect to be exempted. In the third place, the result of this fighting must be victory and everlasting reward, or defeat and everlasting suffering in hell. How awful, &c.!

7. Let us see what are our chances and prospects in this warfare. (**Repeat** *Ephes.* vi. 12). (**Ask the question again and reply**). To this momentous inquiry we answer confidently in the words of St. Paul, "*If God be for us who is against us?*" and we say in defiance of the devil and his myriads of evil spirits. (**Quote** *Ps.* xlv. 2, 3, 8). God Himself would say to us. (*Isai.* xli. 13). He it was that collected together the waters of the mighty deep and fixed its limits, saying to it, "*Thus far shalt thou come, and here thou shalt break thy swelling waves.*" (*Job* xxxviii. 11). So likewise has He set bounds to the devil and his infernal host, commanding them to come no further against the servants of God. They may rage, they may foam, but the boundary line is there, and in all their rage they cannot pass it. Was it not so with Job? The devil had special designs of malice against that great servant of God, but he could do nothing until God permitted him, saying: "*Behold, all that he hath is in thy hand, only put not forth thy hand against his person;*" and it was only so that the devil was able to touch the holy man. So likewise are we all, and each of us, in God's powerful protection, and we can always repeat with the Apostle, "*If God be with us, who is against us?*" (**Add** *Ps.* xxvi. 1, 2, 3).

The devil is strong, no doubt, and the weakest of his infernal associates is more than a match for an army of men—no matter. **Quote** "*Qui habitat in adjutorio Altissimi, in protectione Dei coeli commorabitur.*" (*Ps.* xc. 1). With all his strength the devil cannot touch a hair of our heads, if God be with us. (**Quote** *Matt.* x. 30, and *Luke* xxi. 18). The spirits of wickedness may be numerous beyond counting, but the good angels are still more numerous. (**Relate**, for illustration, the passage about

Eliseus, 4 *Kings* vi., applying the words, 16th verse). The devil may be very astute, and no doubt the most stupid and ignorant demon in hell has more talent and learning than all the philosophers that ever lived. But one text of Scripture, one idea put into our heads by God, is sufficient to puzzle, and disconcert all his cleverness. He quoted Scripture when tempting our Divine Lord; but our Lord quoted Scripture against him and drove him away; for "*There is no wisdom, there is no prudence, there is no counsel against the Lord.*" (*Proverbs* xxi. 30). The devil may have a wicked spirit dogging us wherever we go; but we have our Guardian Angel appointed to take care of us in all our ways. (Quote from *Ps.* xc.). Therefore, though face to face with the devil and his wicked spirits of darkness, we have nothing to fear, if, as St. Paul says, "*God be with us.*" But, observe, O observe! St. Paul says IF. O what a terrible word! a word of only one syllable, consisting only of two letters, yet a word on which our destiny turns for all eternity! Therefore, after saying "*if God be with us,*" we should entertain the contrary supposition, and say if God be *not* with us; or rather if we turn away from God, what then will be our case face to face with the devil and his evil spirits, whose every thought, intention, and endeavour are aimed at our eternal ruin? What will be our position if, turning away from God, and putting ourselves out of His protection, we stand in the battle-field by ourselves alone? &c. Alas! the history of mankind is before us, and what does it tell us of the overthrow, the disasters, and enslavements of mankind in every age to the power of the devil? Man has only come forth from the hand of his Creator, and almost immediately the devil overcomes him, and in overcoming him he has overcome us all, to such a degree that it required the blood of a God to remedy our overthrow. Men increase and multiply. The devil prevails once more against them, and all flesh corrupts its way, so that a deluge is required to purify the world! Again the world, so to say, begins anew, and the devil begins his work anew also, and succeeds so as to blot out the very idea of the true God from the soul of mankind, with the exception of the little nation of the Jews, and concentrating all the resources of his power, &c., upon this people, he makes them be guilty of the greatest crime that could be perpetrated upon earth, the crucifixion of the Lord of Glory. And now, even after the work of man's redemption has been wrought,

has he not the greater part of the human race walking with him in the broad road of eternal perdition, so that our Divine Redeemer has been forced to say, that "*Though many are called, few are chosen.*"

8. Go on to say he carries on this war in all sorts of ways, but chiefly in three—viz., Possession, Obsession, and Ordinary Temptation. (Describe each).

By Possession, he puts a poor human being into the possession of one or more of his evil spirits, so that entering into him they take bodily possession of him and torment him in all manner of ways. This tyranny he exercised to a fearful extent over mankind before the coming of our Divine Lord on earth. (**Quote instances**). Poor Magdalen had no less than seven. (**Mention the case related in** *Luke* viii.), **and say generally that** this horrid thing of demoniacal possession seems to have been as common at the time as ordinary bodily diseases. (**Quote** *Mark* i. 32 ; *Luke* vii. 21). **Observe,** that since the time of Christ, this annoyance of the devil has ceased, in a great measure owing to the grace of Christianity. Yet there are some cases of it here and there, on which account the Church has certain forms of prayer, called *exorcisms,* for driving away evil spirits out of the possessed, and has a particular Order called *Exorcist* for that purpose.

Obsession is a different sort of persecution, by which, without entering into a man, he exhibits to his view—that is, to his eyes, or his imagination—all sorts of fiendish spectres and devilish forms. This is rare, and a mode of attack reserved for great servants of God, whom he cannot overcome by ordinary temptations. (**Relate the instance in the life of St. Anthony. See** *Breviary,* vi. *lesson, and the life of the Saint, Butler's Lives of the Saints, Jan.* 16).

But Ordinary Temptations are the general way in which he carries on his attacks against us. In these temptations he uses force and stratagem in turns, and in all kinds of ways. He is constant and unremitting ; a thousand times we may have overcome him ; he will be as earnest and persistent still as he had been from the beginning. He tempts us by himself, and when he does not, he appoints one of his evil spirits to do so for him. This evil spirit pursues us wherever we go. He allies himself with all that is corrupt in our evil nature for our ruin ;

with our pride, &c. (Here go through the Seven Capital Sins and continue) : He also allies himself with the world, making use of all its scandals and bad examples, of its honours, riches, and pleasures, to seduce us, &c.

9. Pass on to say—Behold, then, our situation between God and His angels on the one side, the devil and his spirits of wickedness on the other. Between both what are we? Poor weak creatures ; of ourselves able to make no stand, not even so much as to excite one good thought within us! But at the same time, "*We can do all things in Him who strengtheneth us*," as the Apostle tells us. (*Phil.* iv. 13). Nevertheless, God leaves us free to range ourselves under His standard, or to pass over to the standard of the evil one. We are come, therefore, to the practical purpose of our instruction, and we are to take our resolution on one side or the other. Shall we hesitate between God and the devil? Oh! that we had remained faithful to our baptismal vows! In our baptismal vows we renounced Satan, &c. ; but, alas! we have turned renegades, and passed over to the opposite camp. Oh! let us now, as the fruit of this instruction, renew these holy engagements, and say in the sight of high heaven :

Conclusion.

Oh! my God, as in my baptism I renounced Satan, so do I renounce him now; as in my baptism I renounced all his works, so do I renounce them now ; and as then I renounced his pomps, so do I renounce them now ; and once again, my Saviour, I give myself to Thee, as in my baptism, to adhere to Thee inviolably, observing Thy holy commandments, and walking in Thy holy footsteps according to Thy blessed example, in the hope of triumphing over the enemies of my salvation, and enjoying the fruits of that redemption Thou hast purchased for me by laying down Thy life and spilling Thy adorable blood for me on Calvary.

Consult Theology, "De Angelis," and "Butler's Lives of the Saints," on Guardian Angels, 2nd Oct.

SEVENTH DISCOURSE ON THE FIRST ARTICLE OF THE APOSTLES' CREED.

MAN, HIS CREATION, DIGNITY, AND FALL, AND THE PROMISE OF A REDEEMER.

"I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of Heaven and Earth."

Introduction.

In the works of God, some are purely spiritual, some are material, and some are compound beings consisting of spirit and matter. In speaking of the Angels we have treated of the first order of beings; in speaking of the works of the six days we have treated of the second order, saying a word or two of man, who constitutes the third order, and who was made on the sixth day.

We now return upon him, to speak more at length respecting him. Need I say how interesting this subject is, coming home, as it does, to ourselves as a distinct order of beings amongst the works of the Almighty.

[Invite attention and invoke a blessing.]

Body of the Subject.

1. Narrate the creation of man as in Genesis, adding the formation of Eve, and exhibit both as the first parents, from whom all mankind derive their origin.

2. Return on the narrative to inculcate the following points:— 1st, The manner in which the Almighty approached the creation of man, contrasted with the other works. 2ndly, The model adopted— the image and likeness of God Himself. 3rdly, Accordingly in his body he is different from the other animals by his erect form, exhibiting a dignity superior to all other living creatures here below. But in soul the resemblance to God is complete. Show this by reference to the soul, it being a spiritual substance, one, and having, at the same time, three faculties, memory, understanding, and will. Also as God is immortal, so too the soul of man. 4thly, How thus ennobled in body and soul man is appointed the lord of visible creation. Detail and quote *Gen.* i. 27, 28, 29, 30; also *Psalm* viii.

3. Proceed to say that man, as he came from the hands of God, was not only lord and master of the other creatures of God here below, but also lord and master of himself, having full control over his passions and inclinations, that he was created in innocence and holiness, and richly endowed with supernatural grace, being destined for a supernatural end, namely, to possess those thrones in heaven that had been left vacant by the fallen angels, that he was placed in a garden of delights called paradise, a heaven upon earth, where, exempt from suffering, he was not to die, but after a time fixed in the designs of God, was to be translated from this world to the kingdom of heaven. But the Almighty, who had subjected His angels to a trial of their fidelity, decided to subject our first parents to a trial likewise. He consequently imposed a command upon them for this purpose, saying (*Gen.* ii. 16, 17).

4. Go on to say—And now we approach the terrible tragedy. When the devil was cast out of heaven, envy and malice became his ruling passion. He could not bear the idea of another order of beings to take his place and the place of his apostate associates. Hence he resolved upon man's ruin, by tempting him to violate God's command by eating of the forbidden fruit.

Here narrate the fact (*Gen.* iii.), and the consequences to our first parents and their posterity in soul and body, and the various evils, which, proceeding from this source, have inundated the world—wars, famine, pestilence, &c.

Proceed to state the promise of a Redeemer by saying—But is fallen man to be abandoned by God? Or has he any means of retrieving his fall? He has offended a God of infinite majesty, and, sinful creature as he is, how can he make an adequate atonement? Alas! this would be beyond all that were possible, even to the angels of heaven, could he enlist them in the effort. What then is to happen to fallen man? O, wonder of wonders! God Himself interposes, and from the first moment after the fall of our first parents, He promises a Redeemer to come. Addressing the serpent, the form the devil had taken, He said to him (*Gen.* iii. 14, &c). Thus through the mercy of God are man's hopes lifted up again, and, in the promise of a Redeemer to come, he is bid to look forward once more to the supernatural end for which he was created.

Before closing our observations upon man we will derive edification from reviewing in a summary way, as time does not permit us to do so at greater length, some beautiful reflections of St. Augustine on the same subject. He commences by lifting

up his heart to God in prayer, saying—"O Divine Word, by whom all things were made, open Thou my mouth that I may relate all Thy favours from the beginning." He then proceeds to consider man in his creation, saying, "Behold, O Lord, I am, I exist, because Thou hast created me; and if Thou hast created me, and numberest me in the number of Thy creation, it is because Thou hast pre-ordained it from eternity, before Thou hadst done anything in the beginning, before Thou hadst stretched out the heavens, and before the abyss of the ocean existed, when yet Thou hadst not made the earth, nor had the foundations of the mountains been laid, nor the fountains burst forth. Yes, before doing all these things, which Thou hast done by Thy Divine Word, Thou hast foreseen in the most certain prevision of Thy providence that I should one day be Thy creature, and Thou hast willed me to be Thy creature." And then, going on to consider the nothingness of man's origin, he continues—"And whence is this, O Lord, to me, O most bountiful Lord, whence is this to me, and what was the material of which Thou didst create me?" He immediately answers his own question, saying to the Almighty, "I was not, I had no existence, and Thou didst create me, and give me a being. I was nothing, and out of this nothing Thou didst make me something." Following up his reflection he says, "And what sort of a thing hast Thou made me? not a drop of water, nor fire, not a bird, nor a fish, not a serpent, nor a brute animal of any kind, not a stone, nor a log of wood, nor one of those things which possess a mere existence, nor one of those things, which, besides a mere existence, have power of growing and increasing, nor one of those things, which, besides existence and the power of growing and increasing, have in addition the faculty of sensation; but Thou hast given me a being superior to all those things, for, besides existence, a power of growing and increasing, together with the faculty of sensation, Thou hast given me a nature only inferior, and in a small degree inferior, to that of Thy angels in heaven: yes, I have said in a small degree inferior to Thy angels, for they possess the happy knowledge of Thee by vision, whereas I have it only in hope: they see Thee face to face, whilst I see Thee as through a glass, in a dark manner; they fully and I only in part."

But the holy doctor is not content with considering man as little less than the angels, as little inferior to these celestial

beings; but raising his thoughts still higher, he says with St. Paul, "But when that which is perfect is come, and that which is only in part shall be done away; when we shall behold Thy glory with open face, and shall be transformed from glory unto glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord, what then will hinder us being equal to the angels, when Thou wilt have crowned us with the crown of hope, and adorned us with glory and honour equal to the angels; yes, equal to them in everything, for Thy own truth had said it, in the resurrection they shall neither marry nor be married, but shall be as the angels of God in heaven, and they are sons of God, and as sons of God the brethren of Him, who, being the Son of God, became also the Son of Man." And grounding himself upon this thought he ascends to a still higher ascent, and says of man, that he is even superior to the angels, because, in the person of our Divine Lord, man is God, and God is man, and not an angel; transcending all creation he arrives at the sublime inference: "On this account I will permit myself to say, that man is the most worthy of God's creatures, because the Word that was in the beginning with God, the Word by which God said let light be made, and there was light, the Word by which God created all things in the beginning, that same Word was made flesh, and dwelt amongst us, and we have seen His glory. Behold the glory in which I glory, O Lord my God, my life, and the entire glory of my soul." And giving way to the fervent burstings of his soul, he breaks forth into the thanksgiving with which we will conclude, "I therefore confess to Thee, my Lord and my God, that in creating me a being endowed with reason, Thou hast made me in a certain sort equal to Thy angels, since by the Word I am capable of a perfection equal to that of Thy angels, so as to have the adoption of Thy son through Thy Divine Son in whom Thou art well pleased, co-heir, consubstantial, and co eternal with Thee, our only Lord Jesus Christ, our Redeemer, our Enlightener and Consoler, our Advocate with Thee, and the Light of our eyes, our Life, our Saviour, and our only Hope, Who had loved us more than Himself, through Whom we have secure confidence laid up with Thee, and the hope and access to come to Thee, because He gave us the power to become the sons of God by believing in His name."—(*Soliloq.* viii.)

5. Nevertheless, the temporal ills remain, the havoc made by original sin in the soul continues, in the darkness which over-

spreads our understanding, the weakness of our will, and the rebellion of our passions—and this poor body subject to sickness and so many miseries, must die, and it is through this gate of death we are to recover our immortality.

Conclusion.

Infer the malice of sin, first, from the punishment of our first parents and its consequences to their posterity, and, secondly, from the impossibility of recovering from so dismal a fall, were it not for the interposition of God Himself in our behalf. Thank our Divine Lord for His goodness and mercy in redeeming us, and exhort to a life of holiness in order to have, as the Apostle says, "*Fruit unto sanctification, and the end life everlasting.*" (*Rom.* vi. 22).

Consult Catechism of the Council of Trent on the Creed; Gaume, "Catechisme de la Persévérance," vol. 1, leçon. xii.; Guillet's "Projets d'Instructions," vol. 1, xvi. xvii. Inst.; "Meditations of St. Bernard," I. Med. "*De dignitate hominis.*"

EIGHTH DISCOURSE ON THE FIRST ARTICLE OF THE APOSTLES' CREED.

ON GOD AS OUR FATHER, PRESIDING OVER, PRESERVING, RULING, AND GOVERNING THE UNIVERSE.

"*I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of Heaven and Earth.*"

Introduction.

In our last discourse on the first article of the Creed, which still engages our attention, we saw how this visible world declares the existence of a God. We saw that there is but one God, and that He is infinitely perfect. We reviewed the works of His hands in heaven and on earth. But it remains that we consider Him in His quality of Father, preserving, presiding over, ruling, and governing the world He created. It is to keep Him before our minds in this character that the Apostles' Creed lifts up our minds to Him as Father. "*I believe in God, the Father Almighty,*" coupling the title of Almighty with that of Father, to teach us that He has not only the affection of a

father, to wish all that a father's love could desire for his offspring, but that He has the power also of doing all that a father's heart can prompt him to accomplish. How consoling to look up to God in this view, regarding Him as our universal Father fulfilling all the offices of a father in our regard.

[A few words to engage attention and invoke a blessing.]

Body of the Subject.

Lay down *the following points:*—

1. That after creating the universe God did not leave His creatures to themselves. A father is not a father in begetting his offspring merely; he takes care of it throughout its helpless years, and puts it forward in life in due time. So God is a Father in maintaining the existence of the works that He has created, and aiding them to attain the ends for which He destined them in creation.

Here inculcate how all the works of God require His continued preservation and unceasing concurrence, to produce the effects for which He destined them.

2. That His preservation and fatherly care of the works of creation extend to all things without exception, even to the most minute objects, and engages His infinite wisdom, goodness, and power.

3. That next to His own glory in creating this world, He had in view the use and advantage of mankind. It follows that it is also for our use and advantage He preserves the other creatures here below, and concurs with them for the innumerable benefits we derive from them. Hence infer a twofold obligation we owe to Almighty God—one on account of our own personal preservation, and the other on account of the preservation of His other creatures in this world for our use and benefit.

As regards the first, our own personal preservation, we are to consider that, as we could not exist one moment without His preservation of us, and as we should fall back into our original nothing, if at any moment He withdrew His sustaining hand from us, so it follows as a necessary consequence, that we are indebted to Him from moment to moment for our very existence, as if from moment to moment He was to create us anew. Let us listen to the beautiful words of St. Augustine on this subject. Addressing himself to the Almighty, he says, "I should, O Lord, constantly perish, unless Thou didst unceasingly rule over me, and every moment Thou placest me under new obligations to Thee, because every moment Thou bestowest upon me Thy great benefits. As therefore there is

not a single hour, or a single point of time throughout my entire life, in which I do not enjoy Thy beneficence, so ought there not be a moment, in which I should not be mindful of Thee, and love Thee with all my strength." (*Solil.* xviii.)

But it is not only on account of our own personal preservation that we are indebted to God, as if every moment He was to create us anew, but we owe Him a similar obligation for His constant preservation from moment to moment of all His other creatures here below, that He maintains in existence for our benefit. Like ourselves, it is "*in Him they live, move, and have their being.*" (*Acts* xvii. 28). Our obligations, therefore, to God's holy Providence are multiplied not only with every moment we ourselves live and exist, but every moment that every other of His creatures created for our use and benefit is continued and upheld in existence by the all-sustaining hand of His Omnipotence. Should not our life, therefore, be a constant thanksgiving to Him? Should we not desire that every breath proceeding from our mouth, that every pulsation of our hearts, that every step we take, that every move we make, would be so many acts of thanksgiving: nay, should we not call heaven and earth and all creatures to our assistance, to help us in giving constant thanks, praise, and benediction to that fatherly goodness and power that reigns over us from on high, preserving us and maintaining us in existence from moment to moment, from the instant of our creation, and preserving and maintaining the other works of His hands in a similar way that He has created for our use and benefit.

4. The love and goodness with which He exercises His paternal care of us. (Quote *Ephes.* iii. 14, 15, 16, 17).

Condense Bishop Hay's "Devout Christian," vol. i. on "the breadth and length, height and depth of the charity of God."

5. Infer how justly we call Him Father. How we are taught to do so by our Divine Lord in so many passages of the Gospel, viz.—The Lord's Prayer. (*Matt.* v. 16; vi. 4, 8, 15, 26). Also notice how with the care of a father He combines the tenderness of a mother. (*Isai.* xlix., 15).

[N.B.—Intersperse sentiments of praise, thanksgiving, benediction, gratitude, obedience, sorrow, &c. To excite the last feeling, quote *Malac.* i. 6; *Isai.* i. 2, 3].

Conclusion.

Conclude by a rapid recapitulation and an act of oblation.

Consult Council of Trent on the Creed, and Bishop Hay's "Sincere Christian," vol. i., chap, iii. 29, 2, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11.

NINTH DISCOURSE ON THE FIRST ARTICLE OF THE APOSTLES' CREED.

ON THE TRINITY.

'*I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of Heaven and Earth.*'

Introduction.

We are still occupied with the first article of the Apostles' Creed. We learn from it that there is a God, that there is but one God, and that He is infinitely perfect. So far we acquire a knowledge of God from the works of His hands, by the exercise of our reason aided by the light of revelation and faith. Yet, after all, we can only behold God and His Divine perfections "*as in a glass obscurely*," as the Apostle teaches, knowing only "*in part*," whilst awaiting the happiness of "*seeing Him face to face*," and of "*knowing even as we are known*" (1 *Cor.* xiii. 12). But we proceed to consider in our present subject a mystery in God which our limited reason, of itself, could never in any way or degree reach, and for which we are totally and entirely indebted to his own revealed Word. It is the great ineffable mystery of the Holy Trinity.

Go on to say, it was in some sort insinuated in the words made use of by the Almighty in the creation of man, "*Let us make man to our own image and likeness*" (*Gen.* i. 26)—that it was known to the patriarchs and prophets, and more or less distinctly to the learned of the Old Law, but that it was reserved to be fully revealed and propounded by our Divine Saviour as an essential article of Christian belief.

A word or two on the importance of the subject, as being necessary to be distinctly known and believed by every one who has attained the use of reason, and is therefore expressed in every formula of Christian faith, and is constantly invoked in the liturgy and prayers of the Church, and begins and ends all acts of Christian piety and religion in making the sign of the Cross.

[Here engage attention and invoke a blessing.]

Body of the Subject.

1. *Preliminary Observations.*—1st. The Blessed Trinity is a mystery, that is, &c. 2ndly. As such it is above our reason, though not contrary to it. 3rdly. In it, as in all other mysteries, there are two things to be distinguished—first, *the fact* of the mystery, as an existing thing; secondly, *how*, or in what manner it exists. Now, *the fact* of its existence is a matter which our understanding can get hold of, and it is this we are required to believe; but *how*, or in what manner it exists —this is a matter, which our understanding can get no hold of, and, of course, we are not required to know it, nor can it be an object of our faith to believe it.

Examples. The union of the soul and body: hearing, seeing, and the various movements of the body. For example: I move my hand or foot—that I do so is *a fact*, which I have perfect knowledge of; but *how* I make the movement is a thing I do not know, nor can I understand it even after applying all the powers of my mind to the task. Nay, that movement of hand or foot, simple as it appears, comprises a variety of facts in itself, each of which is as incomprehensible as the main fact, in which it is comprised. Let us consider for a moment these facts in detail. First, I will the movement to be done, and impart the order for doing it to my nerves; secondly, the nerves, taking this order from my will, transmit it to my muscles; thirdly, the muscles in their turn, obeying the nerves, call the sinews into action; fourthly, the sinews, using a mechanical power they have over the joints and bones, execute the movement, and do so with the precise force required, neither more nor less, as though it were a matter of calculation, or weight, or measure; and, finally, when the movement is accomplished, a report goes back through bones, joints, sinews, muscles, and nerves, not to my will, from which the movement emanated, but, passing my will by, it goes to my understanding, informing it that the required movement has been actually performed. Now, here see what a variety of facts are presented to us. We are conscious of these facts having taken place. We know them, therefore, as facts; but how they have taken place, who can tell but the great Author of our being, who has contrived so wonderfully a system so full of mystery to the human mind? In these, and all such examples, there are two things to be taken account of,

as in the mysteries of religion—*the fact* as to its existence, and the question *how*, or in what manner such a fact exists. As to the fact, we have a clear and certain knowledge of it, but not so as to how the fact exists.

Apply this to the Blessed Trinity, showing that we believe in *the fact*, that in one God there are Three Persons, because God Himself declared it; but as to *how* the mystery exists, this is beyond our comprehension, and, therefore, is not to occupy our thoughts, as we believe in the mystery.

It is related of St. Augustine, that being alone by himself on the sea-shore, he applied his powerful mind to the task of understanding the Most Holy Trinity; and as he was walking along absorbed in thought, he came up to a child, whom he saw making a hole in the sand with a sea-shell he had in his hand—"What are you doing, my good child?" said he, addressing the child. "I am making a hole in the sand," was the reply. "That I see," said the other, "but I would be curious to know for what purpose?" The child, "for the purpose of putting the sea into it." "O you mean, for it is right to speak correctly, putting some of the water of the sea into it." "No, indeed, but to put the sea, the whole sea into it." "O don't be so silly, and don't speak so foolishly, my dear little fellow." "Let me tell you," replied the child, "what I am doing is less foolish than what you are trying to do, to comprehend the mystery of the Blessed Trinity, as if it were possible to contain that which is infinite within that which is finite." So saying, the child disappeared, and the saint was taught the lesson, that in the Blessed Trinity, as well as in all the other mysteries of God, he was to adore what he could not comprehend.

Add some admonitions from the last chapter of the fourth Book of the Imitation of Christ, substituting the Trinity for the Blessed Eucharist, in order to discourage scrutinizing the mystery, &c.

2. Keeping this distinction in view, of *the fact* of a mystery, and *how it exists*, we enter on the body of the subject, by asking, what is the Blessed Trinity?

Answer: Three Divine Persons in one God—three in one and one in three—three Persons in one God, and one God in three Persons. Behold the mystery of the Most Holy Trinity.

Answer objection: "But how can this be?"—by observing first, that this is what we cannot understand; but lest it should on that account appear contrary to reason, adduce illustrations—*e.g.*, first,

the human soul, which is one as God is one, whilst the memory, the understanding,and the will are three distinct faculties in that one soul, like the three Divine Persons in one God; secondly, the shamrock, as used by St. Patrick. Relate the anecdote, and go on to say—one herb and three leaves: the one herb showing the Unity of God, and the three leaves the Trinity of Persons.

3. Then bring out the following points:

First—The names of the Three Divine Persons, viz., etc.

Secondly—That they are to be named in that order to denote the procession of the Son and the Holy Ghost. Explain the doctrine.

Thirdly—That in these several ways they are really distinct; so distinct as that the Father is not the same Person with the Son or Holy Ghost, but a really distinct Person from them. Say the same of the Son and Holy Ghost.

Fourthly—That each of them is God; that is the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God, yet there are not three Gods but only one God.

Fifthly—That the three Persons being but one God only, they have but one and the same Divine Nature; and they are, therefore, one and the same in all the Divine perfections of that Divine Nature.

Exemplify this from the Athanasian Creed.

Sixthly—That they are one, and have one and the same action in works outside themselves, but that nevertheless certain of these works are in the language of theology, ascribed to them separately and respectively. Explain.

Conclusion.

Inculcate practical devotion to the Most Holy Trinity, especially by Acts of Faith, Hope and Charity, and Imitation.

Consult Theology—Guillet's "Projets d'Instructions," vol. i. Inst. 14; Gaume's "Catechisme de Persévérance;" Bishop Hay's "Sincere Christian," vol. i., cap. 2; Catechism of Council of Trent on the Creed.

For pious sentiments see Breviary, Office of Trinity Sunday; "Meditations of St. Augustine," xi. xii. xxx. xxxi.; his Soliloquies, xxxii.

[N.B.—Try to avoid all abstruse explanations, and abstract expressions. You may omit all about substances, personalities, processions, relations, notions, &c., as being unnecessary for a popular instruction, and too refined to be understood by a general audience.]

Announce the several points to the audience in categoric form, saying, "in the first place," "in the second place," &c. Raise the points by interrogations, so far as they will admit, with a view to

greater distinctness. For example—After saying, *point second*, "They are to be named in this order," you ought to ask—Is there any reason for naming them in that order? Reply yes, and explain. As also *in point four*, after saying "each of the three Divine Persons is God," you could ask—"Are there three Gods?" and answer no, and explain. Raise *point five*, by asking, "Is any of the three Divine Persons older, more powerful, or in any way more perfect than the other?" Answer no, and explain. The *sixth point* raise in the same manner, by asking if they have the same action, so that the works of one are also the works of another. Answer, and explain.

TENTH DISCOURSE

ON

THE APOSTLES' CREED.

THE SECOND ARTICLE.

"*I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord.*"

Introduction.

These words, so familiar to us all, announce to us the second article of the Apostles' Creed. **Recite in a summary way** the fact respecting Philip the deacon and the eunuch (*Acts* viii.), ending with the words of the eunuch, "*I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.*" **Go on to say**, this is the saving truth we are to consider in the second article of the Creed. It is one of the fundamental truths of our holy religion; our salvation is bound up with it. "*This is eternal life,*" says our Blessed Lord, "*that they may know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou has sent.*" (*John* xvii. 3). We should, therefore, enter upon the consideration of this article with the deepest interest, and the most earnest reverence.

[Invite attention and invoke a blessing.]

Body of the Subject.

1. Before entering on the consideration of what is immediately contained in the words themselves, which announce

to us the second article of the Creed, it will be highly useful to make some preliminary reflections by way of preparation, in order to understand the article.

First Reflection.—We have already seen how our first parents, by transgressing the precept which the Almighty had imposed on them, incurred His Divine displeasure, were expelled from the terrestrial paradise, &c.; and we have also seen, that all mankind being mysteriously involved in their transgressions, we were all to be born children of perdition. Nevertheless, our perdition through God's mercy was not to be like that of the fallen angels. Accordingly, the Almighty, after reproving our first parents, revealed to them a Redeemer to come. When speaking to the serpent, He said—"*I will put enmities between thee and the woman, and she shall crush thy head.*" (*Gen.* iii. 15). **Explain and go on to show** how the tradition of a Redeemer to come was constantly propagated and preserved amongst the people of God under various appellations—the Messias—He who was to come—the Desired of nations—the Desire of the eternal hills—the Saviour—the Just One, &c. (*Gen.* xlix. 10, 26); (*Agg.* ii. 8); (*Isai.* xlv. 8). In this way the hopes of mankind were sustained, &c. **Observe** how happy are we, who have experienced what the world could only look forward to, &c. (*Matt.* xxx. 17).

Second Reflection.—Who is to be this great Redeemer, that is to lift up man from his fallen state, and restore him to the embraces of his offended Creator? The mercy of God has promised a Redeemer, but the justice of God requires adequate satisfaction to His Divine Majesty. But by whom is this satisfaction to be made? By man himself? No—**Represent all mankind**—Patriarchs, Prophets, &c., of the Old Law, Apostles, &c., of the New Law, united, were it possible, in making satisfaction to the offended Majesty of God—**extend** their efforts over thousands of years—**suppose** all sorts of penances, &c., and **assert** that all should fall infinitely short of the satisfaction required, &c. **Enhance this reflection,** by supposing all the spirits in heaven were to unite with all mankind—the angels, archangels, &c., and **assert again,** these combined efforts of men and angels should fall short of the satisfaction required. **State the reason.** On account of the grievousness of the offence, which, in consequence of the infinite dignity of God, who is offended, was, in a certain sense, infinite, and, therefore, to be repaired only by the intervention of a

person of infinite merit. (Enlarge and infer how terrible is God's justice, &c.)

Third Reflection.—The satisfaction therefore required, being beyond all that men and angels could perform, and requiring the intervention of a person of infinite merit, we are to look up to God alone for hope—we are to look up to His infinite mercy alone to interpose between His justice and guilty man. O, what a mystery is now before us! Yes, God in His mercy, the second Person of the Most Holy Trinity, undertakes to be man's Redeemer, &c. How adorable this intervention! Looking forth from His high sanctuary, and beholding the fallen condition of mankind, and their utter inability to rise, &c., He was moved to compassion, and, addressing His eternal Father, He said, "*Sacrifice and oblation Thou wouldst not*," *&c.* Quote the passage (*Ps.* xxxix. 8, 9) and comment upon it, &c., as containing a promise of the Incarnation. Infer the grievousness of sin requiring such a reparation. Compare this reparation with the creation of the world, which cost the Almighty only a word—"*He spoke and they were made: He commanded and they were created.*" (*Ps.* xxxii. 9).

Fourth Reflection.—The Eternal Son having offered Himself to the Eternal Father to take upon Himself the office of Mediator, He only awaits the time when He will enter upon this great work. Men are increasing and multiplying on earth. A thousand years roll on—succeeded by a second, a third, and a fourth thousand—for a "*thousand years*" with God, "*are only as yesterday that is passed.*" (*Ps.* lxxxix. 4). At length the moment fixed in the Divine decrees is arrived, and "*He who is to come*," "*the Messias*," *&c.*, disposes Himself to "*go forth as the bridegroom from the bride-chamber, rejoicing as a giant to run the way.*" (*Ps.* xviii. 6, 7).

Fifth Reflection.—Sentiments of gratitude grounded on the considerations: 1st. That there was no necessity on His part to become our Mediator. 2ndly. No advantage or interest to accrue to Him therefrom. 3rdly. No right on the part of mankind. 4thly. That He was prompted only by His own spontaneous bounty, &c. Illustration from a king against whom his subjects had risen in rebellion. He puts down the rebellion, but the interests of his justice require that the rebels be punished. He has an only son, who is touched with compassion for the evil end awaiting them, and he offers himself to his father to

make satisfaction, by putting himself in place of the rebels, and undergoing the punishments which they were doomed to suffer. Observe that such a case never occurred, but if it had, how would it be celebrated in history, &c.

2. These reflections prepare us for the consideration, in detail, of the words comprising the second article of the Creed. Go on to explain them from Catechism of the Council of Trent, showing:—

1st. The meaning of the title Jesus, and how it especially suits the Redeemer to come.

2ndly. Why the title Christ is added, and the meaning thereof.

3rdly. That He is the Son of God and true God, &c.

4thly. That He is our Lord, and we His servants, being dedicated to Him in baptism.

Conclusion.

Recapitulate, ending with an oblation to our Divine Lord, as our Supreme Lord and Master, &c., "*who is seated above all principalities and powers*," *&c.* (*Eph.* i. 21).

Consult Catechism of Council of Trent on the subject of this Article; Bishop Hay's "Sincere Christian," vol. ii., chap. vi.; Gaume's "Catechisme de la Persévérance," vol. ii.

ELEVENTH DISCOURSE

ON

THE APOSTLES' CREED;

AND

FIRST ON THE THIRD ARTICLE.

"*Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, and born of the Virgin Mary.*"

Introduction.

We have seen in our last discourse how mankind having shared in the guilt of our first parents, forfeited all right to the kingdom of heaven, and were unable to satisfy the justice of their offended Creator, and that it was necessary, therefore, for God Himself to interpose in their behalf; that in His infinite mercy, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity took upon Himself the office of Mediator for mankind with His Eternal

Father, and that it was accordingly decreed in the councils of the Most Holy Trinity that He would place Himself in our stead, and for that purpose would take our nature upon Him, and become man. But for the execution of this merciful purpose He is to be conceived and born of a virgin. This mystery was bound up with the traditions of a Redeemer from the commencement of the world. As the Redeemer to come was to be a second Adam, repairing the evils entailed on mankind by the first, so He was to have a mother, who was to be a second Eve, repairing likewise the evil-doing of the first. "*A virgin shall conceive*," says the prophet, "*and bear a son, and his name shall be called Emmanuel*." (*Isai.* vii. 14).

Go on to say, we will dispose ourselves to consider in the present discourse how this singularly privileged Being was elected and prepared for the part she was destined to have in the great work of man's redemption.

[Bespeak attention and invoke a blessing.]

BODY OF THE SUBJECT.

1. *Election of Mary for the dignity of Mother of God.*

Quote again, "*A virgin shall conceive*," *&c.*, and ask—Who will be chosen for this sublime dignity? The generations of mankind, all the daughters of Adam, are before the view of the Most High from all eternity. Who will be chosen from amongst the thousands? The all-seeing eye of the Almighty discerns her through the vista of ages, and, therefore, knowing her, predestined her, &c. How appropriately, therefore, does the Church apply to Mary the words, as if speaking of herself she would say, "*The Lord possessed me in the beginning of His ways*" (*Proverbs* viii. 22-30) as far as the words, "*I was with Him forming all things*," inclusively.

Infer, therefore, that Mary, in the choice which God made of her was placed above all women, deserving already by anticipation the compliment of the angel—"*Blessed art thou among women*."

2. *The Immaculate Conception.*

Destining Mary for so high a dignity, it became the Divine Wisdom to confer upon her exemptions and privileges suited to it, "*A house is being prepared, not for man but for God*," (1 *Paral.* xxix. 1), said David, of the temple of Jerusalem. But in a much stricter sense are we to say: an abode is to be prepared in Mary, not for man but for God, who is to take flesh

from her flesh—the very flesh by which He is to redeem the world. Hence it was not to be said of her as of other mortals, "*That she was conceived in iniquities, and that in sins hath her mother conceived her.*" (*Ps.* l. 7). Oh! no, thrice no; Mary is to be conceived without sin.

Here observe, that this pious belief of the Church, at all times, was made an article of faith in 1854. Quote words from sixth lesson of the Immaculate Conception, Octave day, 15th December, and notice, that this act is one of the glories of Pius IX.

3. She was exempt from all actual sin during her life afterwards (*Council of Trent, sess.* vi. *Canon* xxiii.)

4. She was so enriched with grace, as that, according to the teaching of the most learned divines, her sanctity, even in her conception, exceeded that of all men and angels together. They apply to her the words of the Psalmist—"*The foundations thereof are in the holy mountains.*" (*Ps.* lxxxvi. 1). Thus Mary began her career at the height of perfection the greatest saints aspire to, but never attain to, in this life, for, alas! all perfection here below is imperfect.

5. She was gifted with the use of reason from her Immaculate Conception, together with infused knowledge of divine things, and the gift of prophecy.

6. She received constant increase of graces, and her faithful compliance with them increased and multiplied her merits every moment of her life (See "*Glories of Mary*" on this point, vol. ii., discourse 2, point ii., sec. 3).

7. Her oblation of herself in the temple.

8. *Her espousals.* The reasons (see St. Jerome, Office, Vigil of the Nativity of our Lord, vii. lesson). Add that she knew, on getting married, by revelation, as is most commonly believed, or at least from some other source, that her vow of virginity would not be exposed to any danger.

9. Having reviewed these graces and privileges in Mary, her high dignity, &c., we see exemplified in her a rule, which God observes in the guidance of His Providence. It is as St. Thomas teaches it—"grace is given to every one according to the purpose for which he is chosen," (*P.* iii. q. 27, art. 5). The same rule is stated by St. Bernardine of Sienna, who says, "It is a fixed rule in sacred theology, that when God chooses any one for a particular state, He bestows on him the favours necessary for that state." (*Sermon* 10, *art.* 2, *chap.* i.)

Go on to say, that it was according to this rule that, destining for Mary the sublime dignity of Mother of God, he exempted her from original sin, &c.

Conclusion.

Recapitulate the foregoing graces and privileges, and end with some devotional sentiments to Mary, and a prayer, *e.g.* "*We fly to thy patronage*," *&c.*, or the prayer of St. Bernard, "*Memorare.*"

Consult Catechism of the Council of Trent on third article of the Creed; also, "Glories of Mary," vol. ii., 2nd discourse, as well as vi. lesson of "Patronage of St. Joseph," 3rd Sunday after Easter.

TWELFTH DISCOURSE

ON

THE APOSTLES' CREED;

AND

SECOND ON THE THIRD ARTICLE.

"*Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost and born of the Virgin Mary.*"

Introduction.

We have seen the Second Person of the Most Adorable Trinity ready to come forth from the bosom of His Eternal Father, like the bridegroom coming forth from the bride-chamber, and prepared as a giant to run His way, as the moment arrived for His entering upon the office of Redeemer. And we have also seen how the Divine Providence had prepared the Vessel of election here on earth, who was to co-operate with Him in this great work by becoming His mother, and by giving to Him of her own flesh and blood, the very flesh and blood, by which He was to pay man's ransom. We are now to consider how this great mystery was accomplished; how the Eternal Word was made flesh, in being conceived by the Holy Ghost and born of the Virgin Mary, according to the terms of the third article of the Creed.

[A few words to engage attention and a short invocation.]

Body of the Subject.

1. *Gabriel is deputed to announce the Incarnation.*

In decreeing the Incarnation, God could have descended into the womb of Mary without asking her consent. But "*disposing all things sweetly*," (*Wisd.* viii. 1), He planned the mystery, so that Mary's consent should be asked, and freely given by her. How admirable this condescension! How honourable to Mary, &c. Accordingly, He appoints an Archangel, the Archangel Gabriel, to go on an embassy to Mary, to treat with her about the mystery that is to be accomplished in her! O! how sublime the scene we are to witness! The Eternal Father called to Him this Prince of His heavenly court, and said to him, "I wish to send you to the nether world upon a great message, the greatest that was ever sent from heaven to earth. My only-begotten Son offers Himself to redeem mankind by Himself becoming man. I have accepted the proposal. We have selected from amongst the daughters of Adam one who is to be His mother; but we desire that she become so by her own consent. You are, therefore to go down to her and ask her consent. As you enter into her chamber you will salute her with profound reverence, saying to her '*Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee: Blessed art thou among women.*' In her humility she will be disconcerted, and troubled by a salutation so complimentary. You will reassure her by saying '*Fear not, Mary, for thou hast found grace with God. Behold thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and shalt bring forth a son, and thou shalt call His name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of David His father; and He shall reign in the house of Jacob for ever.*' When you will have communicated those tidings, you will observe her embarrassed on account of a vow of virginity she has made, not seeing how she can keep this vow and become a mother. You will therefore explain to her that the vow, instead of being violated, is to receive a new consecration in her becoming a mother, for you will say to her, '*The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee; and therefore also, the Holy, which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God. And behold thy cousin Elizabeth, she also hath conceived a son in her old age, and this is the sixth month with her that is called barren.*' On hearing this

explanation she will consent, saying, '*Behold the handmaid of the Lord: be it done to me according to thy word.*' As she will have pronounced these words your embassy will have attained its object, and you will immediately come away." (*Luke* i.)

2. *The descent of Gabriel.*

Having received his commands, Gabriel immediately descends with more than winged rapidity through the regions of space. But whither does he direct his flight? To Rome? No. To Alexandria? No. To Jerusalem? No. Whither then? To a little town of no importance in Galilee, so inconsiderable as to give occasion to the reproach, "*Can anything of good come from Nazareth?*" (*John* i. 46).

And whom does he search for in this little village? An empress? a queen? In a village there could be question of no such personages. Then does he go to the most respectable of the inhabitants? Alas! how different are the ways of men from those of God, &c. He goes to one of the most obscure cottages in the place, in search of an humble maid, the wife of a poor tradesman, &c.

Here condemn the vanity of wealth, station, &c.

3. *The angel with Mary.*

Repeat the Gospel narrative, interspersing here and there words of comment, to give effect to the scene; and end by saying—The great mystery is accomplished, the mystery of the Incarnation, "*the mystery evidently great, the mystery of godliness, which was manifested in the flesh, justified in the spirit, appeared unto angels, preached unto the gentiles, is believed in the world, is taken up in glory.*" (1 *Tim.* iii. 16).

Conclusion.

Invite the audience to join with the angels in heaven in adoring, &c., the goodness, mercy, wisdom, and power of God in this mystery, &c.

Consult Catechism of the Council of Trent, "Projets d'Instructions," par M. Guillet, vol. i., Inst. xxii., vol. iv. Inst. cxxxiv.

[N.B.—Reserve details of doctrine for next discourse.]

THIRTEENTH DISCOURSE
ON
THE APOSTLES' CREED;
AND THE
THIRD ON THE THIRD ARTICLE.

"*Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, and born of the Virgin Mary.*"

Introduction.

In our last discourse we witnessed wonders—wonders in heaven and wonders on earth. We saw an Archangel deputed by the Eternal Father to communicate the mystery of the Incarnation to the humble maid of Nazareth. We saw this prince of the heavenly court descend with the velocity of the lightning flash. We saw him in Mary's presence full of reverence for a sanctity, and sublimity of perfection, greater than he had ever seen amongst the choirs of angels in heaven. We heard the words of salutation he addressed to her; how he calmed her fears; explained her difficulties, and in the end obtained from her the ever to be remembered words, "*Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it done to me according to thy word,*" whereupon the mystery of "*the word made flesh*" was accomplished within her immaculate womb. We are now, in God's name, to enter upon an examination of this great mystery, in order to understand what we are to believe, in detail, respecting it, so far, at least, as our feeble reason enlightened by divine faith will enable us to pursue such an investigation. In this investigation we have two inquiries to make—*First*, we are to inquire what faith teaches respecting our Divine Lord in the mystery of the Incarnation; and, secondly what we are to believe respecting Mary, His blessed Mother, in the same mystery. The first branch of this most important subject will be sufficient for the present discourse, and we shall reserve the second to form a distinct and separate subject.

[Invite attention and beg a blessing.]

Body of the Subject.

1. In this mystery, hidden in God from all eternity, our mere reason can serve us but little, and we must have recourse

to our holy faith "*as the proof of things that appear not*," according to the expression of St. Paul. (*Heb.* xi. 1). Now, we have to congratulate ourselves, that our faith speaks very distinctly respecting the Incarnation, and we shall be guided by the Gospel, and the Athanasian Creed, that great standard of orthodoxy respecting the Incarnation, as well as the Most Holy Trinity. It commences with the solemn warning, "*it is necessary for eternal salvation that every one believe faithfully the Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ*," and then it proceeds to say—"*It is, therefore, our right faith that we believe and confess*," *&c.*

Here quote the words of the Creed; after which lay down the following points, dwelling upon each separately, as far as may be necessary for explanation, using the Catechism of the Council of Trent, but avoiding all obscure and subtle theological details.

2. Guided, therefore, by this authorised explanation of faith, as also by the Gospel, we are to believe—That when the Blessed Virgin pronounced the words, "*be it done to me according to thy word*," "the Holy Ghost came immediately upon her, and the power of the Most High overshadowed her," according to the declaration of the Archangel, and by this Divine power there was formed within her, and of her own pure substance alone, a most perfect human body, whilst, at the same time, was created out of nothing by the same Almighty power a most perfect human soul: and this soul and body were united together, and united at the same moment to the Second Person of the Most Holy Trinity; and thus THE WORD WAS MADE FLESH within the immaculate womb of Mary.

Here express astonishment, and invite men and angels to adore a mystery, in which the power and wisdom of God are so wonderfully displayed, &c.

3. In the mystery of the Incarnation thus accomplished within the ever chaste womb of Mary, we are to consider two distinct natures in Him, Who is become incarnate. *First*, the nature of God, according to which He, who was God from all eternity, continues to be God still; and, *secondly*, the nature of man, according to which He now becomes man also, being thereby both God and man at the same time. (How wonderful, &c., &c.)

4. We are to consider from what sources this God-man takes

these two natures, so distinct. *First*, then, as God, and Second Person of the Most Adorable Trinity, He proceeds from the Eternal Father, being born of Him from all eternity, "*God of God, Light of Light*," *&c.* (Repeat Nicene Creed to the words, "*was made man*," inclusively). *In the second place*, we are to believe, that as man He was conceived in time, that is, at the moment of the Incarnation, taking a body from the ever Blessed Virgin alone, by the power of the Holy Ghost, she remaining a virgin, according to her own express declaration, "*I know not man*," and the words of the angel to St. Joseph saying, "*that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost;*" and as to the human soul that animated His body, it was created out of nothing, like the soul of every human being. (O mystery of mysteries! &c.)

5. Whilst we believe these two distinct natures, the nature of God and the nature of man, in our Incarnate God, the nature of God, by which He is God, and the nature of man, by which He is at the same time man, we must take care not to say that He has two distinct persons. No; the two natures are united, and thus united form but one and the same person. And whilst we say the two natures are thus united in one and the same person, we must further take care not to say, that these two natures are confounded, or mixed up together, as if the Divine nature could be converted into the human nature or the human into the Divine. By no means. The mystery is this:—The two natures remaining distinct, the human nature is assumed by the Divine Person; or, in other words, God, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, unites to Himself a body and a soul like ours, and, in this union, He is one and the same person in the two distinct natures of God and man. We have in ourselves an example of two distinct natures in the same person.

Here introduce the illustration of the Athanasian Creed, "*nam 'cut anima rationalis*," *&c.* Explain.

We have two distinct natures in our composition, namely, a soul and a body. They are distinct one from the other, so that the soul is not mixed up with the body, nor the body with the soul. Nevertheless, they are united, as we know, and form in their union one and the same person—man. Thus, although we eat and drink with the body distinct from the soul, and we think with the soul distinct from the body, yet it is one and the same

person who eats and drinks, and at the same time thinks. So it is with the Incarnate God. Whilst He is God, equal to His Father in power and majesty, He is also man, having a body and soul like us, but all the time He is but one and the same person—Christ the man-God, or God-man.

6. Having thus explained the doctrine of the Incarnation, proceed to show how our Divine Lord humbled Himself in the mystery, *first*, on account of the infinite distance between God and man—(Quote *Phil.* ii. 6, 7, and dwell on the words "emptied Himself"): *secondly*, in uniting Himself with man, not merely according to the more noble part of our compositiou, our soul, but according to what we have in common with the brute creation, our body; *thirdly*, in taking a body passible and subject to death, whereas He could have, all at once taken a glorious and immortal body, such as He assumed at His resurrection; *fourthly*, in not exempting Himself from the weakness and miseries of childhood, so as to become man in all the maturity of a full-grown man like Adam, our first parent.

See these points developed in Bourdaloue's "Spiritual Retreat," in the meditation on the Incarnation, first Point.

7. From considering how our Divine Lord thus humbled Himself in His Incarnation, observe His object was to exalt us from our fallen state, by making us partakers of His Divinity, "*making Himself poor, whereas He was rich, that through His poverty we might become rich*" (2 *Cor.* viii. 9), becoming with Him, "*sons of God, and if sons*," says the Apostle, "*heirs also.*" "*Heirs, indeed, of God, and co-heirs with Christ*" (*Rom.* viii. 16, 17), thus raising us to a higher degree of dignity than that from which we had fallen. (See Bourdaloue, *ibid.*—Points ii., iii.)

N.B.—If you have time illustrate the exaltation of human nature in the mystery of the Incarnation, by applying to that purpose the parable of the good Samaritan (*Luke* x. 30, 33, 34), dwelling upon the circumstances of the good Samaritan descending from his horse, and seating the wounded man upon him, which apply, by making the wounded man represent mankind at large, wounded and half dead by original sin; whilst the good Samaritan represents our Divine Lord descending from His throne in heaven, and stooping down to our prostrate condition in His Incarnation, in order to lift us up to a participation of His divinity, &c.

Conclusion.

Inculcate humility as the fruit of the discourse.

Consult Catechism of the Council of Trent on the third article of the Creed, also Bishop Hay's "Sincere Christian," vol. i., chap. vii., and Theology, on the Mystery of the Incarnation.

FOURTEENTH DISCOURSE

ON

THE APOSTLES' CREED;

AND

FOURTH ON THE THIRD ARTICLE.

"*Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, and born of the Virgin Mary.*"

Introduction.

In our last discourse we have seen in detail what our holy faith teaches us respecting our Divine Lord in the ineffable mystery of His Incarnation; that He is both God and man, &c.

[Here recite verbatim the words of the Athanasian Creed, and proceed to say.]

We now go on to consider what we are to believe in detail likewise respecting the Blessed Virgin in the same Divine mystery of a God incarnate within her immaculate womb.

[A word or two to say how important the subject is; invite attention, and invoke a blessing.]

Body of the Subject.

1. *The exaltation of the Blessed Virgin in the mystery of the Incarnation.*

As the Blessed Virgin gave her consent to the message of the Archangel Gabriel, by pronouncing the words—"*Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it done to me according to thy word,*" and as the Holy Ghost came upon her, according to the words of Gabriel, and the power of the Most High overshadowed her, immediately was accomplished in her "*the mystery of godliness,*" as the Apostle calls it, "*which was manifested in the flesh, justified in the spirit, preached unto the Gentiles, is believed in the world, is taken up in glory,*" (1 *Tim.* iii. 16), immediately, let me say, "*the word was made flesh*" within her immaculate womb. What words can express the dignity to which Mary is now exalted!

Here go through a rapid summary of Mary's privileges and graces previous to the Annunciation, as set forth in Second Discourse,

vol. ii., "Glories of Mary," which treats of her election and preparation for the dignity of becoming Mother of God, saying before each, "up to this she was so and so," beginning with her election from amongst all the daughters of Adam, and when you will have come to the Annunciation, you will say:

But now the great mystery is accomplished, of which all her greatness, excellence, and privileges were only a preparation; the *mystery which*, as the Apostle says, "*hath been hidden from ages and generations*" (*Col.* i. 26). Now, she is the living tabernacle of the Second Person of the Most Holy Trinity, who, &c.

[Here go through a series of titles and epithets applied to our Divine Lord by the Patriarchs and Prophets, which see in "Butler's Fasts and Feasts," on the Sacred Name, Second Sunday after the Epiphany, vol. i., as also in the Lessons of the Office of the Immaculate Conception, and end by saying.]

Now, in fine, in this mystery of Godliness, in which the Eternal Son of God becomes man within her sacred womb, she is the palace, the abode, the tabernacle of Him, whom the Eternal Father looking down from the highest heavens proclaims amongst His angels, as He is in time to proclaim to mankind, to be "*His beloved Son, in whom He is well pleased*," His beloved Son, who liveth and reigneth with Him and the Holy Ghost for ever and ever.

[Words of admiration, &c.]

2. *Her virginity maintained in the Incarnation and birth of Christ.*

Bring out this point by asking:—But in conceiving in her womb, and bringing forth a son, according to the words of the angel, did not Mary surrender her virginity? No; a thousand times no. Great though the dignity, high though the honour of being the mother of a son, who, as Gabriel told her, was to be great, &c. (*Luke* i. 32, 33), she would not consent except upon the express condition guaranteed to her by the angel's promise, that she should remain a virgin. Let us bring before our minds the scene of the Annunciation. The angel appears to her saying, "*Hail, full of grace.*" She is troubled, but says nothing. He goes on to say, "*the Lord is with thee.*" She is still more troubled, but says nothing. He proceeds, adding, "*Blessed art thou amongst women.*" Yet she says nothing, although her humility is greatly distressed by compliments so

extraordinary. But when, proceeding with his message, the angel says, "*Thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son*," she breaks silence; she protests, and says, "*How can this be done?*" How can I conceive in my womb, as you say; how can I bring forth a son, as you assert, "*I, who know not man.*" I, who from my tenderest years have consecrated myself to God, to live and die a virgin! The angel immediately calms her alarm, assuring her that her virginity was to remain untarnished and unblemished—nay, that it was to receive a more brilliant lustre—a lustre from heaven; for, says he, "*the Holy Ghost shall come upon thee*," *&c.* (*Luke* i. 35). Thus Mary's virginity is put in the fullest security; it is a matter of compact between her and the heavenly messonger; it is specially guaranteed her by the word of an Archangel speaking on the part of God; and it was only after having received this express assurance, she says, "*Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it done to me according to thy word.*"

But it was not only on the occasion of the Annunciation that Mary's virginity was promised. It was bound up with the mystery of the Incarnation in signs and prophecies from the beginning of the world. Did not Isaias foretell hundreds of years beforehand, "*Behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and his name shall be called Emmanuel*" (vii. 14); and the rod of Aaron, and the burning bush, burning without being consumed, and Gideon's fleece, &c.—these figures did they not foreshadow, that, whilst Mary was to be a mother, she was to be a virgin at the same time?

And as in conceiving, so also in giving birth to the fruit of her womb did Mary remain a virgin. Just as our Divine Lord in His resurrection came forth from the tomb, whilst it remained closed and sealed, and as He entered amongst His disciples, the door remaining shut, and as the sun penetrates the glass of our windows without breaking them, or in any way injuring them, so our Blessed Lord came forth from the womb of our Blessed Lady, without any breach of her ever-blessed virginity. (You can quote here *St. Chrysostom, as in Lessons* v. *and* vi., *in Festis B. V. M., per annum.*)

[N.B.—In explaining this and the following points, avoid a physical analysis of the ordinary mode of human generation sometimes treated of, in order, by contrast, to explain the maternal virginity of Mary.]

3. *Mary Mother of God.*

But we have reserved Mary's highest privilege: it is, that in conceiving the Son of God made flesh, and in giving Him forth to the world, she is become the Mother of God; and really so as much as any ordinary woman is the mother of the son whom she brings forth. Gabriel makes no difference; "*Thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son.*" Isaias makes no difference: "*A Virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and his name shall be called Emmanuel.*" Elizabeth makes no difference: she distinctly calls her "*Mother of God.*" Filled, as she was, with the Holy Ghost at the moment, she exclaimed, "*Whence is this to me, that the Mother of my Lord should come to me?*" (*Luke* i. 43). The Gospel makes no difference: everywhere she is called Mother of our Divine Lord. Our Divine Lord is with equal distinctness called her Son (*Matt.* i. 21, 23, 25); (*Luke* ii. 7, 51); (*John* ii. 1; xix. 25, 26).

In these and other passages our Divine Lord is everywhere called the Son of Mary, and she His Mother, in the same way as any one else would be called the son of his mother, or any woman the mother of the son to whom she had given birth.

Are we not, therefore, shocked to hear any one say that Mary is not the Mother of God? This impiety was proclaimed at an early period of the Church.

Here give an account of the heresy of Nestorius, and his condemnation in the Council of Ephesus, observing in introducing the matter, that to give pretence to his error he distinguished between the Divine and human natures of our Divine Lord, and said that, according to these two natures, He had also two distinct persons, one Divine and the other human: or, in other words, one by which He was God, and the other by which He was man; and taking his stand on this distinction, he impiously asserted that Mary was the Mother of the person man in our Saviour, but not of the person God—in other words, that she was not the Mother of God. A thrill of horror came over the Church, &c.

After the account of the Council, you may explain, that a woman is a mother to her offspring, such as it is within her womb before birth, and such as it is on being born.

Thus it is with every one of us. Our parents did not create this soul which we possess. It was created by God; but because we possess this soul, having received it from God, before we were born, therefore we say a woman is the mother of her offspring not merely as to its body, but as to its person, including body

and soul. So, likewise, is it in the case of Mary. True, our Divine Lord did not take His divinity from her, nor even His soul as man, but because He existed within her sacred womb both God and man, in the one and the same person, and was so born of her, therefore she is properly styled the Mother of God without restriction or reserve, no more than in the case of any other mother with regard to the child of her womb.

4. *Mary's dignity as Mother of God.*

It places her above all creatures in heaven and on earth, above the saints, who have served God here upon earth, and above the blessed spirits, who glorify Him in heaven.

[Here a detail of the saints, according to their categories; Patriarchs, Prophets, &c., as in the Litany of the Saints; then the heavenly spirits, according to their choirs.]

She constitutes a special order for herself in the gradations of the celestial hierarchy, whereby she is Queen of Angels and Saints, and Lady and Mistress of the entire universe, above all that is not God, and inferior to God alone.

For development of this point see Guillet's "Projets d'Instructions," Inst. cxxxi.; also Second Nocturn of the Octave of the Assumption, and Second Nocturn of the Feast of the Holy Name of Mary.

Conclusion.

Infer great confidence in Mary on two grounds: *first*, that she can, and *secondly*, that she is most desirous, to obtain for us all the blessings and graces and favours we stand in need of for soul and body, for time and eternity.

Consult authors referred to above.

[N.B.—Each point to end with devotional appeals to Mary within the limits of the points respectively. They will be found in the responses of the Lessons of the Office of the Annunciation, and the Antiphons of Lauds of the same festival.]

FIFTEENTH DISCOURSE
ON
THE APOSTLES' CREED;
AND
FIFTH ON THE THIRD ARTICLE.

"*Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, and born of the Virgin Mary.*"

Introduction.

In our previous discourses on the third article of the Creed, we have spoken of the mystery of the Incarnation. The article comprises also the mystery of the Nativity, in saying—"*He was born of the Virgin Mary.*" This mystery I cannot better present to you than by reading for you the account which the Gospel gives us of it, and which we find in the second chapter of the Gospel according to St. Luke. It is as follows: Here read to the twentieth verse of the above chapter; after which say:—Such is the simple account given us by St. Luke of the great event, on which we are to dwell this evening. Now, as when it occurred, it is an event of joyous import; an event giving "Glory to God, and peace on earth to men of good will."

[Invite attention and invoke a blessing.]

Body of the Subject.

1. Proceed with the narrative of the Gospel, circumstance after circumstance, interposing reflections and sentiments of piety, as you go along, such as the circumstances suggest. The reflections must not be long, lest you should thereby interrupt the course of the narrative; and the sentiments may be in the way of exclamations, or short expressions of admiration, benediction, compassion, faith, gladness, gratitude, love, oblation, praise, petition, &c.

2. In speaking of the birth itself you will bring out the two points of the Catechism of the Council of Trent on this article of the Creed, namely, "*Christum Virgo peperit*," et "*quomodo Virgo peperit*," showing that, as in her conception of our Divine Redeemer, so also in giving Him birth, she remained a virgin, the nativity of our Divine Lord having taken place without any detriment to her virginal integrity.

Conclusion.

Summon the audience into the presence of our Divine Lord in the state of poverty in which He was born, and observe with St. Bernard,

that either He was deceived by making a choice of that state, or the world is deceived by a contrary preference. But, as He could not be deceived, it follows that the world is in error in its love of wealth, and the good things of this life. Words of comfort to the poor, and exhort those who are possessed of earthly means to keep their hearts disengaged from them, that they may be at least poor in spirit, and thereby earn the benediction, "*Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*" (*Matt.* v. 3).

Consult A. Lapide, his "Commentary;" and Guillet's "Projets d'Instructions," Inst. cxxi.; as also the Catechism of the Council of Trent on this article.

SIXTEENTH DISCOURSE

ON

THE APOSTLES' CREED;

AND

SIXTH ON THE THIRD ARTICLE.

"*Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, and born of the Virgin Mary.*"

Introduction.

We still continue to be occupied with the third article of the Creed. The latter words of this article, viz., "*born of the Virgin Mary,*" furnished the matter for our last discourse. These words brought us to the manger of Bethlehem, there to adore our newly-born Saviour. Having come amongst men to redeem and save us, He delays not to enter at once upon this office of mercy, by subjecting Himself in eight days' time to the ceremony of Circumcision, beginning in this ceremony to shed for us that blood, which He was afterwards to shed, to the last drop, for our salvation. This ceremony, as connected with the birth of our Divine Lord, and consequently comprised in the third article of the Creed, is to be the subject on which we are to entertain ourselves this evening.

[Invite attention and invoke a blessing.]

Body of the Subject.

1. **Explain**—1*st*, that the ceremony of Circumcision was instituted by God; 2*ndly*, that it was a sign of His alliance or covenant with Abraham, nearly 2,000 years before the coming of our Divine Lord (here briefly recite the history of its institution); 3*rdly*, it was to be a mark distinguishing the descendants of Abraham, as the chosen people of God, from the rest of mankind; 4*thly*, it was to be a kind of sacrament, having for object the remission of original sin, like Baptism in the Christian dispensation; 5*thly*, it consisted of an operation performed on a certain part of the body of the newly-born infant, which operation was very painful, and accompanied with shedding of blood from the wound.

2. **Explain** that our Divine Lord was not subject to the law of Circumcision, yet He wished to submit to it for motives highly instructive to reflect upon—1st, to give us an example of obedience. [**Observe** that man having fallen by disobedience, it was necessary to repair his fall by the opposite virtue.] 2ndly, to take upon Himself the imputability of our guilt. [**Explain** that, being God, He was not guilty of any sin Himself; but undertaking to expiate the sins of men, He put Himself in their place for that purpose, and, therefore, submitted Himself to the imputation of a sinner, by submitting to a ceremony instituted as a remedy for sin.] 3rdly, to expiate the guilt, He took upon Himself, by suffering the pain due to our sins. Here **explain** that our infant Saviour, having the perfect use of reason, and with it all the tenderness of an infant, felt intensely the painful operation of Circumcision.

3. **Show forth** the efficacy of the precious blood of our Saviour in His Circumcision, and the confidence which it inspires. For this purpose **take for argument** the words of St. Paul, "*You are come to Jesus the Mediator of the New Testament, and to the sprinkling of blood, which speaketh better than that of Abel.*" (*Heb.* xii. 24). **Recite** the death of Abel, (*Gen.* iv.), dwelling upon the words, "*The voice of thy brother's blood crieth to me from the earth;*" and **bring out** the conclusion of St. Paul, by observing—1st, that the blood of our Divine Lord was more precious; 2ndly, that in the case of our Divine Lord, it appealed not to Divine Justice, as in the case of Abel, but to the Divine Mercy, which is above all the other attributes of God. **Argue** also from the blood of the lamb on the door posts of the Israelites in Egypt. **Recite** the fact as in (*Exod.* xii.) and see application by St. Chrysostom in the office of the Most Precious Blood—2nd Nocturn—and conclude with the words of St. Paul, "*How much more shall the blood of Christ,*" &c. (*Heb.* ix. 14).

4. *The Name of Jesus.* **Observe** how it was in the ceremony of Circumcision, that, under the Old Law, a name was given to a child, as on the occasion of Baptism in the New. **Quote** (*Luke* ii. 21), and **observe**—1st, that the name is given by the Eternal Father. 2ndly, it signifies Saviour, the office which He undertook on coming on

earth, and therefore comprises all the mysteries wrought for man's salvation. 3rdly, it signifies the various attributes of Power, Wisdom, Charity, Sanctity, Divinity, Dominion over mankind.

[See "Journal of Meditations," second meditation on the Circumcision; also "Challoner's Meditations," Jan. 14.]

How truly, then, does St. Paul say, "*It is a name above all names,*" *&c.* (*Phil.* ii. 9).

Conclusion.

Conclude by inviting your audience to kneel down in spirit before our infant Saviour in the mystery of His Circumcision, and acknowledge Him for the God of Majesty whom the angels adore in heaven. Exhort them to join the heavenly hosts in wishing Him Power and Divinity, &c. (*Apoc.* v. 12).

Consult Guillet's "Projets d'Instructions," Inst. cxxii.; also Alban Butler on the Sacred Name, in his "Feasts and Fasts." See also "Breviary, on the Feast of the Most Precious Blood."—2nd Nocturn.

SEVENTEENTH DISCOURSE

ON

THE APOSTLES' CREED;

AND

SEVENTH ON THE THIRD ARTICLE.

"*Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, and born of the Virgin Mary.*"

Introduction.

We are yet in the stable of Bethlehem, and by the crib of our infant Saviour. We have joined the shepherds in their homages of adoration, and rejoiced with the angels of heaven in their chants of "*Glory be to God on high,*" *&c.* We have especially associated ourselves with Mary and Joseph, as they pressed to their breast, and bathed with tears of love, the Divine Babe. We have, moreover, assisted at the ceremony of our dear Lord's Circumcision, and adored that most precious Blood, which began then to flow for the salvation of mankind. We proceed this evening to another event connected with the

birth of our Blessed Redeemer, highly interesting and instructive to meditate upon. It is the adoration of the Magi, or the wise men, who came from a distance to adore Him, Who, as they had learned by revelation, was born King of the Jews. Let us accompany them in spirit on their journey, and let us seek edification in the faith and piety they displayed in their holy expedition.

Body of the Subject.

1. Recite the general expectation at the time of the Messias, referring to the prophecy of Balaam (*Num.* xxiv. 17), and Gospel (*Matt.* ii. 1–13), as showing the fulfilment of the prophecy.

Inculcate that the Star is a figure of the lights, or other intimations, by which God invites us to undertake enterprises, or works according to certain designs He has in our regard. It may be a state of life to which He calls us. It may be the performance of some work of charity or religion. It may be the correction of some vice, or the practice of some virtue, &c. We should obey these intimations of God's will according to the example of the Magi. Lament, that many neglect them, like the inhabitants of the places from which the Magi came, who, as well as they, saw the Star, but paid no attention to it.

The example of St. Teresa is a great lesson to us, teaching us with what courage and confidence we should comply with the calls and invitations of God's grace. In the history of her Foundations the heroic soul exclaims—"O great God, how wonderfully dost Thou manifest Thy power, in giving courage to a little creature, who is only an insect before Thee. No, God, the fault is not Thine, if they, whom Thou lovest, will not execute great things. The fault is our indolence, our pusillanimity. We cannot undertake anything without mingling with it a thousand fears, a thousand human considerations. Behold, O Lord, the reason why Thou dost not display the power of Thy arm, nor the greatness of Thy wonders. For who hath greater pleasure than Thou in bestowing Thy favours, when Thou findest one on whom to bestow them? Or, who recompenses the services rendered to him with such magnificence, as Thou my Lord?" (chap. ii.)—"*Medina del Campo.*"

2. *The Journey of the Magi.* Observe they must have had several difficulties and privations on their way, and likely dangers also, owing to the savage and trackless country through which they had to journey. They, however, persevered, encouraging each other under the guidance of the Star.

Inculcate perseverance in following up the good resolutions we have formed, notwithstanding the difficulties we meet in their execution, and condemn the unsteadiness that makes us give up our good purposes, &c.

3. Recite how as they approached Jerusalem the Star disappeared, and how, notwithstanding, they continued on, and the Divine Light failing for the moment, they have recourse to human aid entering the city of Jerusalem, and inquiring where they should find the object of their search. Here observe how some go on courageously in God's service as long as they are guided by His special graces, but that when those special graces are for a moment withheld, they fall into discouragement, into tepidity, relaxation, &c.

4. Describe their entrance into Jerusalem, the excitement they occasioned, the consultation of the chief priests and scribes, their answer, and departure of the Magi.

Here reflect on the insensibility of Herod, and the priests and others, who, whilst they give directions to others as to where they will find the promised Messias, do not move a foot themselves to accompany them, although Bethlehem was only four miles' distance away; and lament the inconsistency of so many, who can give good advice to others, and will act differently themselves, who could tell those who are in the darkness of error, where they will find the true religion, and will not themselves act up to the duties of that religion.

5. Recite how as the Magi leave Jerusalem the Star again appears, and conducts them along, until, at length, it stops over the stable, where our dear Saviour was born.

Here notice how in the guidance of souls the Almighty varies His treatment. One time directing them with a clear and steady light, which lights up for them the path of duty; at another leaving them, as it were, to grope their way, like a traveller on a dark night along a dreary road, but in the end rewarding their fidelity and perseverance by once more vouchsafing to them the special lights and graces which, for a time, He had withdrawn from them.

Here take occasion to inculcate compunction as the exercise suited for such a state, which is sure, in God's good time, to be crowned with joy. (Quote *Ps.* xxix. 12), "*Thou hast turned for me my mourning into joy; Thou hast cut my sack-cloth, and hast compassed me with gladness,*" *&c.*

6. The entrance of the Magi into the stable, their astonishment at the wretched appearance of everything—however, their faith maintains itself—their reverence—their gifts—the figurative signification of these gifts—(See Challoner's "Meditation on Epiphany")—the graces they received in return—the admonition to take another way home, thus disappointing Herod in the mischievous design he had formed.

Admire the Providence of God, &c., and Observe that we are all in His good keeping, and that we should unceasingly rely on His Providence.

Conclusion.

Conclude by observing that the Magi were the first fruits of the vocation of the Gentiles, and that at this distance of time, we are to look back to them as our forefathers in the Faith; that the recurrence, therefore, of the Festival of the Epiphany should be to us an occasion for thanking God for the great grace of true Faith, and for being members of that Church, out of which there is no salvation.

Consult Guillet's "Projets d'Instructions," Inst. cxxi.

N.B.—Adhere as near as possible to the words of the Gospel in the narrative parts, and make the moral reflections brief, but forcible and earnest.

EIGHTEENTH DISCOURSE

ON

THE APOSTLES' CREED;

THE FOURTH ARTICLE,

"*He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried.*"

Introduction.

From the birth of our Divine Lord, the Apostles' Creed takes us immediately to His death. It does so, because it is a mere summary of what we are to believe, containing only the principal mysteries and other necessary articles of the Christian Faith. It could not, on that account, furnish a regular history of the life of our Divine Lord, which abounds so much in facts and details, that St. John, in terminating his Gospel, and, as it were, apologising for its deficiencies, states—"*There are also many other things which Jesus did: which, if they were written every one, the world itself, I think, would not be able to contain the books that should be written.*" (*John* xxi. 25). It may also be well supposed, that, having witnessed a birth and death so eventful, every Christian would feel a natural desire to know the facts, as far as possible, that filled up a life having such a beginning and such an end. We, therefore, follow the order of

the Creed, passing on, after having treated to so great a length our dear Redeemer's birth, to speak of His tragical end, which is presented to us in the Fourth Article of the Creed in the words I have quoted. "*He suffered under,*" *&c.*

[Invite attention and invoke a blessing.]

Body of the Subject.

1. The Passion of our Divine Lord begins with the agony in the garden, and following up its various stages we should speak in order of the treason of Judas, our dear Lord's arrest, His being dragged into Jerusalem, His arraignment before the several tribunals of Annas, Caiphas, Herod, and Pilate, with all the sufferings and ignominies accompanying these various scenes. We should treat of His cruel flagellation at the pillar, His condemnation, and journey up the hill of Calvary bearing His cross, and falling several times under its weight, till in fine He reaches the fatal spot on which He was to die. The several stages of our dear Lord's Passion I should present to you in detail, and as they occurred, if our time allowed me to do so. But taking account of the limits, within which I must confine myself, I thought it better to invite you, all at once, to Calvary, and ask you to join me in reviewing what our Blessed Lord suffered from His arriving there till He had consummated the great Sacrifice.

2. As He arrives at the top of Mount Calvary, He is exhausted, and is no more than alive after all His previous sufferings. He is, however, allowed no rest, but almost immediately His executioners cruelly drag off His clothes, exposing Him once more, to shame, mockery, and insult, before the gaze of an infuriated mob, and a licentious soldiery, at the same time that in the act of dragging off His clothes they open out afresh the wounds, to which His clothes were clinging since He was loaded with the cross in the court of Pilate. Oh! what a spectacle! and thus it is, O Divine Lord, that by Thy shame and the laceration of Thy virginal flesh Thou makest atonement for the sins mankind are guilty of in their sinful flesh, &c., &c.

Proceed on with the narration as simply and literally as possible, using as far as they will serve, the words of the Gospel, and stopping only for the expression of pious sentiments, as you go along, taking care, that you do not break the thread of the narrative, or

cool the feeling of the audience by the introduction of untimely reflections, or indulging in observations by way of comment on the text.

The sentiments most suitable are admiration, condolence, compunction, thanksgiving, hope, love, oblation, imitation.

4. The seven last words well treated are very effective, and especially the words to Mary and John, which in no case should be omitted.

Conclusion.

End—1st, by acknowledging our being the cause of our Saviour's Crucifixion; 2ndly, by an Act of Contrition grounded on this motive; 3rdly, by an Act of Love, using the words of St. Paul (*Rom.* viii. 35, 38, 39).

N.B.—The sentiments above referred to should be very briefly expressed—and often in the way of ejaculatory outbursts, sometimes addressed to the Eternal Father, at other times to our Divine Saviour Himself, at other times to the Angels of Heaven, and at other times to the audience. They must not be too frequent, as they would thereby interrupt the narrative, which should keep the subject constantly held up as it were to view, in order to rivet the imagination upon it; and above all, they should spring from the narrative, not only as suggested, but in a manner instinctively prompted and enforced by it.

NINETEENTH DISCOURSE
ON
THE APOSTLES' CREED;
THE FIFTH ARTICLE.

"He descended into hell, the third day he arose again from the dead."

Introduction.

The previous article of the Creed conducted us up the hill of Calvary, and made us spectators of the great tragedy of our Blessed Saviour's Passion and Death: and we reflected on the great lessons which this mystery teaches of the grievousness of sin, which required such an atonement; of the justice of God, which required such a satisfaction; and of the goodness and mercy of our Redeemer in putting Himself in our place, and undergoing in His own person the punishment of our transgressions.

The next article of the Creed presents to our consideration the occurrences that happened from His death to His resurrection, and the details of that glorious event. If, therefore, we were afflicted at the heart-rending spectacle of Calvary, we come now to share the joy, which men and angels, and especially the Blessed Virgin, experienced on beholding the great Conqueror of sin, death, and hell, rising gloriously from the tomb.

[Invite your audience to unite with you in this joy, and ask a blessing.]

Body of the Subject.

1. Relate in brief detail the taking of our Divine Lord down from the cross, His interment, the closing up of the monument, and the placing of guards around it, &c., as presented in the Gospels

2. *The descent into Limbo.*

State what Limbo was—the dreary expectation of the inmates, through several ages, of their Deliverer to come—how they were cheered by St. John the Baptist, St. Joseph, and others, who had already informed them of His having actually come on earth, &c.; how they were thus prepared for His appearance amongst them. State the fact of His blessed soul, when separated from His body on the cross, going down to Limbo and say what may have been their sensations, and the address He made to them, &c., &c.—the return of the soul to the body in the grave, and the fact of the resurrection with the circumstances, making this the main subject of the discourse. After which relate His appearances to His Blessed Mother, Mary Magdalen, the Apostles, adding that He continued to renew these apparitions, from time to time, for forty days, in order to show He was truly risen, to instruct His Apostles, and invest them with the powers and prerogatives for continuing His mission on earth by establishing His Church, &c., &c.

3. *The lessons to be derived from the resurrection of our Divine Lord.*

His resurrection to be the model of every Christian's resurrection from sin or tepidity—*First*, by its being real, *secondly*, in the new manner of life He assumed, investing His body with the qualities of a glorified body (name them); *thirdly*, in rising to die no more. Under each head show the analogy our spiritual resurrection should have, and the contrasts which happen only too often between one and the other.

Conclusion.

Conclude by an exhortation to newness of life, new as being real, new as being different from former manner of living, and finally, new by persevering to the end. Close with St. Paul (*Col.* iii. 1, 2).

Consult Guillet's "Projets d'Instructions," Inst. cxxvi., and Bourdaloue's "Spiritual Retreat" on the Resurrection.

TWENTIETH DISCOURSE

ON

THE APOSTLES' CREED;

THE SIXTH ARTICLE.

"*He ascended into Heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God.*"

Introduction.

In our last discourse we saw that our Divine Lord, after His glorious resurrection from the dead, appeared several times to His Blessed Mother, His Apostles, and Disciples, in order to show beyond doubt that He was truly risen, and to give instructions and all due power to the Apostles for the establishment of His Church.

The time, however, arrived for His disappearing from amongst them, and ascending into Heaven. This is the great and glorious fact we have to consider this evening—a fact crowning all the other facts of our Blessed Redeemer upon earth, and terminating the mission He had received from His Eternal Father for the salvation of mankind.

[Invite attention and beg a blessing, saying :—]

Let us beg of our Divine Lord to send down upon us from on high His holy grace, and to raise up our minds and hearts to the worthy contemplation of a mystery so glorious to His Divine Majesty, &c., &c.

Body of the Subject.

1. Proceed to say, that before His Ascension, our Divine Lord spoke of it in various manners, and on various occasions to His Apostles and Disciples, telling them, (here collect and put in consecutive order the various expressions of our Divine Saviour on the subject, as if constituting one address. See the Evangelists, and the first chapter of *Acts*). Then describe the ascent to Mount Olivet in company with His Blessed Mother, &c., mentioning His having celebrated the Sacred Mysteries in a cave, on the side of the mountain, according to tradition, after which He gave them His final benediction, and commenced His Ascension into Heaven.

2. Describe the Ascension as in *Acts* i., adding His being joined by the holy souls from Limbo, and troops of angels, who had come forth from Heaven to unite in the procession ; and continue to describe the Ascension, till He arrives at the gates of the Heavenly

Jerusalem, applying the words in *Psalm* xxiii. 7, 8, 9, &c.; and depict the progress through the ranks of the Heavenly Spirits, till His arrival at the throne of His Eternal Father to Whom you will represent Him giving an account of His mission, using the words, as far as they may be applicable, of *John* xvii. Then represent the Eternal Father rising up and embracing Him, and saying :—

" Welcome, O welcome back, well-beloved Son, to resume possession of that glory, which has been Thine before the foundation of the world. Thou hast accomplished Thy mission amongst men. Their sacrifices and burnt-offerings were of no avail for the taking away of their sins; therefore didst Thou take a body in order to sacrifice it. This Thou hast done, and the effect has been complete. Thou hast satisfied abundantly the demands of My justice outraged by sin. Thou hast reconciled fallen man, *having broken down the middle wall of partition between him and Me, the enmities in his flesh* (*Ephes.* ii. 14). *Blotting out the handwriting of the decree that was against him, taking it out of the way, fastening it to the cross; and despoiling the principalities and powers. Thou didst expose them confidently in open show, triumphing over them in Thyself.* (*Colos.* ii. 14). O well, indeed, hast Thou performed Thy mission! These wounds and scars over Thy entire body shining henceforth in glory, shall witness before angels and redeemed mankind Thy triumph over sin, and death, and hell; and it only remains, O dearly-beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, to seat Thee upon Thy throne of glory, where, together with Me and the Holy Ghost, Thou art to receive honour and glory and benediction." So saying, the Eternal Father, rising from His throne of majesty, conducts our Divine Lord to His seat of glory on His own right hand, and ordering all the Heavenly Host to adore Him, they all burst forth into canticles of praise and adoration, singing as in *Apoc.* v. 9.

3. Explain briefly the words, " *Sitteth at the right hand of God*," and state how, not ceasing to interest Himself in our behalf, He is our Mediator and Intercessor in the court of Heaven.— (*Heb.* ix. 24; 1 *John* ii. 1, 2).

Conclusion.

Infer contempt of the honours, riches, and pleasures of life; a constant aspiring to the glory of Heaven; hope in the mediatorship of Christ with God His Father, &c.

Consult Catechism of Council of Trent, Sixth Article of the Creed; Guillet's " Projets d'Instructions," Inst. cxxvii.; Bourdaloue's " Spiritual Retreat," on the Ascension of our Divine Lord.

TWENTY-FIRST DISCOURSE
ON
THE APOSTLES' CREED;
AND
FIRST ON THE SEVENTH ARTICLE.

"*From thence He shall come to judge both the living and the dead.*"

Introduction.

Our Divine Saviour has undertaken three great offices in our regard—the office of Redeemer, the office of Advocate, and the office of Judge. Having already treated of how He has performed the office of Redeemer, by suffering and dying for us, and how He continually performs, in the court of heaven, the office of Advocate, by constantly interceding and pleading for us with His Eternal Father, we proceed in order to consider how He is to exercise towards us the office of Judge, according to the Seventh Article of the Creed, as also in accordance with the words addressed to the Apostles by the angels on the occasion of our Divine Lord's Ascension (quote *Acts* i., 11). How thrilling this consideration—the appearance we shall have to make one day before the judgment-seat of Christ, &c. (*2 Cor.* v. 10).

Go on to state, there are two judgments awaiting us—one, the Particular, which, &c.; the other, the General Judgment. At present we will, in God's name, treat of the Particular Judgment, leaving the General Judgment to form the subject of another discourse. A word or two on the importance of a subject involving our destiny for an eternity of weal or woe, &c.

[Engage attention and invoke a blessing.]

Body of the Subject.

1. Quote St. Paul (*Heb.* ix. 27)—"*It is appointed unto men once to die, and after this the judgment.*" Observe—both are included in the same decree—death and judgment—to give us to understand that immediately as we shall have drawn our last sigh, &c., the soul finds herself in presence of her Judge, to receive sentence according as she will have done whether good or evil, during life. Dwell upon the sensations of the soul in presence of the Judge. Quote St. Hilarion at the point of death, as in Breviary, 21st Oct.; also holy

Job (xxxi., 14), and (*Ps.* cxlii. 2; cxxix. 3). Infer, if so great was the terror of such saints at the mere thought and expectation of the judgment they had to undergo, what must be the terror of the poor sinner—not at the expectation but at the reality, when he finds himself alone in the presence of the Great Judge. Depict the situation. Oh! ALONE! face to face with the Judge, from Whose lips is to proceed the sentence of Heaven or Hell. What will he do? Attempt to escape? Call friends to his aid? &c., &c. Impossible! Repent? Too late. Oh! if he could but return. Vain supposition, but a supposition of practical importance for us now, that we are still allowed time to repent. Here call upon the sinner to repent, and not to put it off till tears will be of no avail.

2. I said "the soul alone before her Judge." I said wrongly. She will be accompanied by her works; yes, "her works shall follow her." (*Apoc.* xiv. 13). Oh! the sinner, what witnesses will he bring with Him before the tribunal of his Judge to bear testimony against him!

Here go through the enumeration of his sins. Proceed first by categories according to the circumstances—*quis*, *quid*, *ubi*, *quibus auxiliis*, *cur*, *quomodo*, *quando*, without, however, mentioning them, but using them for the sake of order in the enumeration, *e.g.*, *quis*—who is this culprit arraigned before the Supreme Judge? A man that had the use of reason, accountable, therefore, for all the sins his reason condemned; a Christian, accountable, therefore, for all the sins against the Divine Law and the Gospel of Christ; a Catholic, accountable, therefore, for his sins contrary to the laws and ordinances of the Catholic Church. After which go through a detail of various states of life, saying after each—accountable for the sins committed contrary to his duty in that state. Then proceed to the *second* circumstance, *quid*, saying, what a fearful array of sins in all these positions—sins of thought, sins of words, sins of deed, sins of commission, sins of omission—any one of which would be sufficient, if mortal, for his condemnation. *Thirdly*, the circumstance *ubi*—sins committed at home and abroad, within and without, in public to the scandal of others, and in private under the eyes of God alone, &c. *Fourthly*, the circumstance *quibus auxiliis*—sins, in committing which he employed all the faculties of his mind, all the senses of his body, his memory, his understanding, and his will, his eyes, his ears, &c.—state the various ways for each. *Fifth* circumstance, *cur*—sins without motive or reason, or rather against all motive and reason, because against Him, Whom, instead of offending, he had every motive and reason to love, honour, and serve, &c. *Sixth* circumstance, *quomodo*—without any necessity, of his own free will, with full knowledge of what he was doing, of the consequences he was incurring, of the death he had before him, of the judgment he

had to undergo, of heaven and hell, &c. *Seventh* circumstance, *quando*—and all these sins spread over an entire life—sins of childhood, sins of youth, sins of maturer years, sins of advanced life, &c.

Proceed secondly, by order of the commandments, saying—that this fearful array of sins will be presented to the sinner, not in a general way. He will see them one by one, as he committed them, and each one will be a witness against him, saying, "I am thine, thou hast committed me." In vain would he attempt to deny them: his conscience is there to bear witness against him. Oh! his conscience that he disregarded in this life, the remorse of which he stifled. There it is now an inexorable witness against him, upbraiding him to the face with his sins, should he venture to deny one of them. Oh! the conscience, what a mirror! St. Benedict was given to see the whole world collected together in one single ray of the sun: so will it be with the sinner, standing before the terrible tribunal, he will see his world of sin, every single sin as distinctly amongst the rest as if he had only that one sin to fix his attention on, &c. He will see his sins against the honour due to God. Detail principal sins under first commandment; then proceed to the other commandments in order, after which the precepts of the church in rapid detail—finally, the seven deadly sins. Close the enumeration by words of terror and confusion, *eg.*—Oh! what shall be the terror of the poor sinner! Apply (*Luke* xxi., 26), (*Apoc.* vi. 16), and represent too his Angel Guardian and the Devil accusing him of these innumerable sins.

3. Proceed to depict the position of the soul that had departed this life in the grace of God—first speaking of a soul that had preserved its baptismal innocence, and secondly, of a soul that, having lost its baptismal innocence, repented, and departed reconciled to God. Congratulate both, and say—they may have had their difficulties to overcome, their temptations to surmount, their occasions to relinquish, &c.: but all is now over; the evening is come for the labourer to receive his hire, and standing before his Judge, he stands before Him to receive his reward.

4 Having considered the state of the soul under trial, let us now cast our eyes on the Judge Himself, and see the awful qualities with which He is invested. He is a Judge that knows all things, even to the most secret thoughts, so that not only every act and word of our whole lives, but every desire, every intention, will be taken account of. Oh! what hidden things of darkness will be brought to light—what hypocrisies unmasked, what concealments in confession exposed; what deceitful excuses will be laid bare, &c. (Quote 1 *Cor.* iv. 5, and *Matt.* x. 26).

Besides being an all-seeing Judge, He is a Judge of infinite justice, Who, as it is said, "*will judge justices*" (*Ps.* lxxiv. 3), "*Who will search Jerusalem with lamps*" (*Soph.* i. 12), "*Who, has found sin amongst His angels*" (*Job* iv. 18), so that not only our evil deeds, but our good works, will be investigated; our prayers, our fastings, our alms, &c. Oh! what a judgment! Well did the Psalmist say, "*Si iniquitates observaveris*," *&c.* (*Ps.* cxxix. 3) :—"*If thou takest account of our iniquities*," *&c.* who can stand such a trial? (*Job* ix. 3, 12, &c.)

He is, moreover, all-powerful, and cannot be resisted in carrying out the sentence of His justice.

3. Such is the Judge, knowing the entire life of the soul awaiting judgment—infinitely just, so as not to overlook the slightest fault even in our good works, and infinitely powerful to carry out the sentence He is to pronounce. What then remains? Only to pronounce the all-decisive sentence. Oh! sinner, listen to your doom. **Here go through** a rapid enumeration of the various classes of sinners, and **say**—You refuse to give up your evil ways, &c. Come and stand in imagination before the dreadful tribunal, where you will have to stand one day in reality. Come and hear the sentence that awaits you. Here **pronounce** the sentence and **comment** on it; **after which say,** From this sentence of the reprobate let us seek relief in considering the happy sentence of the just. **Announce the sentence.**

Conclusion.

Inculcate—1st, that we should always keep this Judgment in recollection; 2ndly, that we should run at once to confession whenever we commit a mortal sin; 3rdly, that we should examine our conscience every night; 4thly, make every confession as if it were our last. By this means we shall be our own judges, and according to St. Paul, "*If we judge ourselves, we shall not be judged.*" (1 *Cor.* xi. 31).

Consult "Challoner's Meditations," 12, 13, 14 July: Bourdaloue's "Spiritual Retreat" on the Particular Judgment; "Catechism of Council of Trent," &c.

Example in reference to the Particular Judgment.

St. John Climacus relates of a monk, who, after leading a very good life for a considerable time, fell away into habits of tepidity and irregularity; that he got very ill, and that in his

illness he had a vision, in which he fancied himself before the judgment-seat of Christ to be judged and receive his sentence. In this dreadful situation he heard himself accused of his negligent way of life and his irregularities, and just as the sentence was about being pronounced, the vision passed away, and he returned to himself. The effect, however, remained, for as he recovered he shut himself up in a narrow little cell, and would not come out of it, practising there the most rigorous penances, and living on bread and water. He would speak to no one, and had his mind so fixed upon what he saw that, insensible to everything else, he kept himself always in the same position with his face in a particular direction, and his eyes immovably engaged, as it were, with some object, that did not allow them to turn to the right or to the left.

He remained so for twelve whole years. The brothers of the monastery knew something very special must have happened to him, and were afraid to interfere with him. They, however, kept him in view, and when his last illness came they crowded about his little cell, when one of them, speaking for the others, said, "Dear Brother, we all know that you must have some special communications from God to authorise you to adopt the extraordinary manner of life you have led these past twelve years, and we are come about you to hear from you something that you would say to us for our edification, now that God is taking you away from us." Yielding to their request, he told them of his vision, and added, in a tone of the deepest earnestness, "Be assured, brethren, that no one who thinks as he ought to think of death, and the judgment that is to follow it, can have the rashness to commit sin;" and so saying he gave up his soul into the hands of his Creator.

Let us all pray that God will so impress upon our minds the thought of the judgment we have before us in the other world, and thus "*thinking on our last end, we may never sin*" (*Eccl.* vii. 40).

N.B.—This example may be used in treating the first point, or reserved to the end.

TWENTY-SECOND DISCOURSE
ON
THE APOSTLES' CREED;
AND
SECOND ON THE SEVENTH ARTICLE.

"*From thence He shall come to judge both the living and the dead.*"

Introduction.

We have two distinct judgments to undergo, as has been mentioned—one, immediately after we shall have departed this life, which is called the particular judgment; and the other, the general judgment, which awaits all mankind as they shall be assembled together for that purpose on the last day.

Having treated of the former judgment, we shall proceed in God's name to speak of the latter, or general judgment, this evening. The General Judgment! Oh! what a subject! How awful!—how terrific! Many events of great importance have taken place in this world since the beginning, and many important events will no doubt take place yet before it will have come to an end. Kingdoms have risen, and kingdoms have fallen, &c., &c., but unquestionably the greatest event that ever occurred since the beginning of this world here below, and the greatest that will have occurred to its close, will be the event that is to put an end to time, and throw open to mankind the never ending duration of Eternity.

Oh! let us pray that God will vouchsafe to us the grace to meditate on this most important event, so that, keeping it in mind during our lives, we may be prepared to meet the Supreme Judge, when, according to the article of the Creed we are considering, He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

Body of the Subject.

1*st Scene.*—The second coming of our Divine Lord presents several scenes which are to happen in succession: and first, it is to be preceded by various signs, all in character with the terrific event they forebode.

Detail the signs.—1st, on Earth (*Matt.* xxiv. 6, 7, 8); 2ndly, in the Sea (*Luke* xxi. 25-30); 3rdly, in the Heavens (*Matt.* xxiv. 29), (*Mark* xiii. 25), (*Apoc.* vi. 13-14); and depict the terror of mankind (*Luke* xxi. 26), (*Apoc.* vi. 16), (*Luke* xxiii. 30).

N.B.—It will be enough to say of these signs that our Divine Lord foretold them, without quoting references in particular.

2nd Scene.—As the moment fixed in the decrees of Heaven has arrived to put an end to this world, the Supreme Judge sends an angel to make the announcement here on earth. The descent of this dreadful messenger is depicted by St. John:—"*I saw,*" says he, &c. (*Apoc.* x. 1, 2. 3, 4, 5, 6), "TIME SHALL BE NO MORE." The dreadful announcement is the signal for the destroying angel to commence his work of destruction. The fire is lit up, fanned by the breath of God—it spreads, &c.

Go on describing it till you present the entire earth a mass of ruin and destruction.

3rd Scene.—Resurrection of the dead.

The Judge looks down, and beholding the scene of ruin which this world presents, He sees His hour is come. But mankind must be assembled to await His descent among them. He accordingly orders His angel to take the trumpet in hand, and to issue the dreadful summons. The angel at once obeys, and, seizing the instrument, he sends forth a peal—a peal which resounds throughout the universe, penetrating the bowels of the earth, descending to the depths of the abyss, echoing through the caverns of Hell—a peal calling upon all the children of men to arise and come to judgment. No sooner issued than the summons is obeyed.—(*John* v. 25; 1 *Cor.* xv. 52; *Apoc.* xx. 13; 1 *Thess.* iv. 14, 15, 16).

N.B.—Weave these several passages into a description of the scene.

4th Scene.—The descent of the Judge; the opening of the Books; separation of the good from the bad; final sentence. Represent all mankind assembled (*Apoc.* xx. 12), expecting the coming of the Great Judge; then the appearance of the cross; the sign of the Son of Man (*Matt.* xxiv. 30). Then the Judge (*Matt.* xxvi. 64), (*Mark* xiii. 26); the opening of the Books (*Apoc.* xx, 12), (*Matt.* xxv. 32, 33, 34, *et seq.*) Finally the sentence.

N.B.—Weave these several texts into a consecutive narration, using the words without giving the reference.

CONCLUSION.

Inculcate fear and remembrance of the Last Judgment, **quoting** St. Jerome :—"*Whenever I think of that day I tremble from head to foot. Whether I eat or drink, or whatever else I do, that dreadful trumpet seems to sound in my ears:* 'ARISE YE DEAD, AND COME TO JUDGMENT.'"

Consult any of the standard authors. Rely, however, on a simple description, which place the several scenes before the eyes, as it were, of your audience.

TWENTY-THIRD DISCOURSE

ON

THE APOSTLES' CREED;

AND

FIRST ON THE EIGHTH ARTICLE.

"*I believe in the Holy Ghost.*"

INTRODUCTION.

The articles of the Creed we have already treated regard the Father and the Son, the First and Second Persons of the Adorable Trinity, and the article I have just announced brings us to the consideration of the Holy Ghost, the Third Person. We read that St. Paul, meeting some Christians, or persons who would be Christians, at Ephesus, asked them if they had received the Holy Ghost, and they replied, that they had not so much as heard whether there had been a Holy Ghost. We, through God's blessing, have all heard of the Holy Ghost, and we constantly pronounce this adorable name when we bless ourselves, saying, "*In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*;" or saying, "*Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost*," as also, whenever we recite the Creed, or invoke Him in our prayers. Yet many Christians require to be instructed in several points of doctrine respecting Him. Therefore, &c.

Invite attention and beg a blessing in the words :—"Come, Holy Ghost, replenish the hearts of Thy faithful, and enkindle in them the fire of Divine love."

Body of the Subject.

1. In speaking of the Holy Ghost we are to view Him under three different aspects: as He is in Himself—as He is with respect to the other Persons of the Most Holy Trinity—and as He is respecting mankind.

(*a*) *As He is in Himself.*—A Person of the Most Sacred Trinity.

Explain, as the Father is a Person in Himself, and as the Son is a Person in Himself, so likewise is the Holy Ghost a Person in Himself, of the Blessed Trinity. He is, moreover, a Divine Person; *Divine*, that is, He is God, so that, as the Father is God, and as the Son is God, so likewise is the Holy Ghost God, infinite as they are, but one and the same God with them, because all three have but one and the same nature, that is, are but one and the same God.

(*b*) *As He is with respect to the other Persons of the Blessed Trinity.*—Whilst the Holy Ghost *as God* is the same with the Father and the Son, He is a *Person of the Holy Trinity*, distinct from both, so that as the Son is a distinct Person from the Father, so also is the Holy Ghost a distinct Person from the one and the other.

Again, with respect to the Father and the Son, we are to believe the Holy Ghost proceeds from both, as from one principal. To understand this as well as we can, we are to consider that the Father is the source or origin of the entire Trinity, "*for of Him*," as St. Paul says, "*all paternity in heaven and earth is named*" (*Ephes.* iii. 15), and, therefore, not proceeding from any other. We are, in the next place, to consider that the Son proceeds from the Father alone by an eternal generation, whereby He is His only begotten Son from eternity: and then the Holy Ghost proceeds not from the Father alone, nor from the Son alone, but from the Father and the Son *conjointly*. This is beautifully expressed in the Nicene Creed—the Creed we recite at Mass—which says of the Holy Ghost, "*who proceedeth from the Father and the Son:*" and then to show that He is God, the same God with the Father and the Son, immediately adds, "*who, together with the Father and the Son, is adored and glorified.*"

Finally, in considering the Holy Ghost with regard to the other Persons, we are to hold that He is the Third Person in order, that is, as the Father is the First, and the Son

Second, so the Holy Ghost is the Third Person. We must, however, bear in mind that *this order* does not signify any *difference of time*, as the Divine Persons are all three from eternity, and therefore none of them is older than, or prior in point of time to, the others. O how ineffable these depths and heights in the secrets of God! How justly does the Apostle exclaim, "*O the depth of the riches of the wisdom and of the knowledge of God!*" (*Rom.* xi. 33). Surely we have reason to say with the same apostle, "*We see now in a dark manner, and as if through a glass.*" (1 *Cor.* xiii. 12). But we are to keep constantly in mind, that our Faith in presenting to us the mysteries of religion desires only that we should believe them *as facts or truths* in the manner she proposes them, without requiring us to ascend the heights of these mysteries, which are inaccessible to us, or descend into their depths, which are unfathomable to us, to understand *how* or *in what manner* they exist. In this way our faith is, as St. Paul explains, "*the evidence of things that appear not*" (*Heb.* xi. 1), that is, it presents on its own authority certain things to be believed, which otherwise we could not know, and which, even after they are made known to us, remain still out of our view as to *how*, or in what manner, they exist.

(*c*) We come now to the third aspect under which we are to view the Holy Ghost, viz., *the aspect under which we consider Him with regard to mankind.*

Before entering on this view, it may be well to explain, that all *the external operations* of the three Divine Persons, are common to the Persons all three; nevertheless, theology classifies these operations, and adopts a manner of speaking, by which it *ascribes* certain operations to the Father, others to the Son, and others again to the Holy Ghost, making the distinction according to an analogy, or resemblance of those operations with the different Persons respectively. Thus the works of Creation and Omnipotence are ascribed to the Father, He being the source and principal of all, even of the Blessed Trinity itself. Then the works of wisdom and intelligence are ascribed to the Son, He being, as it were, the fruit of the wisdom and intelligence of the Father. And the works of love, goodness and mercy are ascribed to the Holy Ghost, He being the product of the mutual love of the Father and the Son. It is according to this explanation we are to consider the acts and

dealings of the Holy Ghost with respect to mankind, as being His by appropriation, or by being ascribed to Him alone, whilst *in reality* they are the *joint* acts and dealings of the other Persons as well, united with Him in the same Divine nature, wherein they are all but one and the same God.

Then, what are the acts and dealings of the Holy Ghost with regard to mankind in the sense we have just explained? They are contained in the title given Him by the Creed we recite at Mass—viz., the title of LORD AND LIFE GIVER, or Lord, the giver of life. This title brings us back to the very creation of the world, which, next to the glory of God, was made for man's use and benefit. Before man existed at all, and when the universe was one huge and confused heap of shapeless matter, void, empty, darksome, and covered with water, the Holy Ghost is represented as "*moving over the surface of the waters*" (*Gen.* i. 2), imparting to them, and the chaotic mass beneath, a power of life and fecundity to bring forth the various living creatures, which were to inhabit the world, and amongst those living creatures, man especially, for whom, as for their lord and master, they were to be called into existence. Thus, in the very beginning of the world, do we behold the Holy Ghost fulfilling the mission of Lord and Life Giver. But man has a double life, one corporal and the other spiritual, one of the body and the other of the soul, and it is for this latter life of the soul the Holy Ghost is principally our Lord and Life Giver, lavishing upon us the riches of His goodness, love, and mercy.

In our spiritual life we want light to see into the life to come, this being our last end. This light the Holy Ghost bountifully bestows upon us, by revelation and inspiration; for, as the Nicene Creed expresses it, "*Who spoke by the Prophets*," or, as St. Peter says, "*Prophecy came not by the will of man at any time; but the holy men of God spoke, inspired by the Holy Ghost*" (2 *Pet.* i. 21). Thus every page of Scripture, from first to last, is from the Holy Ghost, who guided the pen of the holy writers whilst writing, as He also guided the tongues of the preachers whilst preaching the Word of God, and handing down the things they taught by oral tradition, &c. What an immense provision has not our "*Lord and Life Giver*" afforded us for our spiritual life in thus unsealing the divine secrets, and revealing them to us mortals! It is with these revelations on their lips that all the teachers and preachers of religion have

wrought such wonders in enlightening "*nations seated in darkness and the shadow of death*" (*Luke* i. 79), propagating the Gospel and bringing to all men that light which is "*not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God*," "*giving us power to be made sons of God by believing in His name*" (*John* i. 12, 13).

Moreover, our spiritual life requires constant food for its maintenance, as does likewise the corporal life, which animates our bodies. For this our "*Lord and Life Giver*" has also plentifully provided, by furnishing us with the dispositions required for receiving the Holy Sacraments with which the Church is enriched. The Passion of Christ is an ocean of merit for our souls; but *we must approach* it, or else its life-giving waters must be conveyed to us, and we must be duly disposed, that is, our hearts must be open to receive these "*mysterious waters that are to spring up within us unto life everlasting*" (*John* iv. 14); and this again is the work of our "*Lord and Life Giver*," the Holy Ghost. No, of ourselves we cannot have the necessary dispositions for the Sacraments—of ourselves we cannot open our hearts to receive them—we cannot even, worthily, pronounce the name of the Lord Jesus; we cannot, as St. Paul so distinctly teaches, pronounce that all-saving name, but by the Holy Ghost (1 *Cor.* xii. 3). We are, therefore, indebted to the Holy Ghost for the merits of our Divine Redeemer being made available to us through the Sacraments for our spiritual life. And is there not one of the Sacraments specially His own, in receiving which we receive Himself—the Sacrament of Confirmation? And coming to us in this Sacrament, He does not come empty-handed. He brings with Him His sevenfold gifts, which He imparts to us, His wisdom and understanding, His counsel and fortitude, His knowledge, piety, and fear of the Lord, and with these gifts He bestows upon us His fruits, as St. Paul enumerates them: "*Charity, joy, peace, patience, benignity, goodness, longanimity, mildness, faith, modesty, continency, chastity*" (*Gal.* v. 22, 23).

And as He takes possession of our souls dwelling within us, the Holy Ghost aids us with singular efficacy in another means of spiritual life, which is of the highest importance, viz., our prayers. Nay, He actually prays for us. St. Paul expressly declares—"*Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmity. For we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit Himself asketh for us with unspeakable groanings. And He that*

searcheth the hearts, knoweth what the Spirit desireth; because He asketh for the Saints according to God." (*Rom.* viii. 26, 27). How wonderfully does the Divine Spirit fulfil His mission of love, mercy, and goodness towards mankind, in thus furnishing us with light in the Holy Scriptures and Tradition, with spiritual aliment in the Holy Sacraments and prayer, thereby applying to us the fruits of our redemption! What thanks, praise, &c., do we not owe Him! &c.

But it will occur to every one, that to preserve and perpetuate this mission of the Holy Ghost in our regard, some abiding Institution was, and is necessary, an Institution speaking far and wide, as well as enduring for all times to come, in order to furnish to mankind at all times, and in all places, the bountiful effects of the love, mercy, and goodness of the Divine Spirit. O! yes, such an Institution our Divine Redeemer had resolved upon before sending the Holy Ghost. He sometimes called it His kingdom, sometimes His Church; and its establishment, preservation, and guidance were to be the mission and work of the Holy Ghost. We are therefore to see how the Holy Ghost carried out this mission and this work. But as time does not allow us to comprise so extensive a subject within the limits of this discourse, which has already occupied us to a considerable length, we shall reserve it for another occasion, in order to treat it more amply.

Conclusion.

For the present let us conclude in adoring and glorifying the Holy Ghost with the Father and the Son, as a *distinct* Person from each of them, proceeding from them, God with them, and fulfilling in our regard a mission of peace, and mercy, and love, as our "*Lord and Life Giver*," imparting to us, and maintaining in us, that spiritual life here on earth, which is to be the forerunner of the life eternal awaiting us hereafter in heaven.

Consult "Projets d'Instructions" par M. Guillet, Inst. cxviii. Preparation to receive the Holy Ghost. See Third Lesson, Feast of Pentecost, Breviary. Read the Liturgy of the Church for the Vigil, Feast and Octave of Pentecost, to select suitable phraseology for the subject, also Butler's "Feasts and Fasts," Whitsuntide.

TWENTY-FOURTH DISCOURSE
ON
THE APOSTLES' CREED;
AND
SECOND ON EIGHTH ARTICLE.

"*I believe in the Holy Ghost.*"

Introduction.

In our previous discourse we considered, as well as our feeble understanding enabled us, what the Holy Ghost is in Himself, as also what He is in reference to the other two Divine Persons of the Most Holy Trinity. We, moreover, entered on the consideration of what He is with regard to mankind. In this latter view of the Holy Ghost we saw how He fulfils towards us a mission of goodness, mercy, and charity, revealing to us the hidden things of God, thereby providing us with that heavenly food, which is contained in the Divine word. We saw further how He imparts to us those dispositions of heart and soul necessary, on our part, in order to benefit of the additional good furnished by the sacraments and prayer; and we announced, but had not time to develop, the large share He had in the establishment, and continues to have in the government of the Church, which is to preserve for mankind until the end of ages the blessings of our redemption. We, therefore, take up this portion of the mission of the Holy Ghost as our subject for this evening. But feeling our great deficiency of understanding in presence of a subject so high and holy, let us have recourse to the Divine Spirit Himself, for light and succour, saying, &c.

[Here recite some appropriate stanza or two of the "*Veni Creator.*"]

Body of the Subject.

1. The mission of the Holy Ghost in establishing and ruling the Christian Church commenced even with the Incarnation when Mary pleaded for her virginity, saying: "*How shall this be done, because I know not man?*" (*Luke* i. 34). The Archangel replied: "*The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and*

the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee. And therefore also the Holy which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God." (*Luke* i. 35).

Follow on by adducing the fact of the Descent of the Holy Ghost on our Lord at His baptism; our Lord's promises (*John* xiv. 26—xvi. 7), (*Matt.* x. 20); all which recite continuously, as if all announced together.

2. The fulfilment of these promises in the Descent of the Holy Ghost. Describe this mystery, and the effects produced on the Apostles and first Christians, as stated in the *Acts of the Apostles*. Relate specially the facts of Ananias (*Acts* v.); of Philip (*Acts* viii.); mission of Saul and Barnabas (*Acts* xiii.); the Council of Jerusalem, quoting the words, "*For it hath seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us, to lay no further burden upon you than these necessary things*," *&c.* (*Acts* xv. 28).

3. The organisation of the Church, by a distribution of gifts, so that as in the natural body there are several members with their various functions, so likewise in the Church various offices are appointed; (quote 1 *Cor.* xii.) as far as necessary to bring out the conclusion. (*Eph.* iv. 11). Add that this organisation took form in the progress of time, early in the fifth century, so that the Church in her government consisted thenceforth, first, of Pope at the head of all; secondly, Patriarchs; thirdly, Primates; fourthly, Archbishops, or Metropolitans; fifthly, Bishops; sixthly, Priests.

Observe that if the organisation of the Church appear to have been slow, we should recollect, according to the words of St. Peter, that "*a thousand years with the Lord are as a single day.*" (2 *Pet.* iii. 8).

4. Proceed to observe the constant superintendence of the Holy Ghost over the Church, to keep her from error in faith and morals. First, in the infallibility of the Pope (*Vatican Council*). Secondly, in the infallibility of General Councils (*Acts* xv. 28). Thirdly, in the infallibility of the Church, dispersed according to the promise of our Divine Lord, "*That the gates of hell should not prevail against it.*" (*Matt.* xvi. 18). In these various ways does the Holy Ghost preserve and maintain the Church, "*reaching from end to end mightily.*" (*Wisd.* viii.)

Conclusion.

Conclude by acts of thanksgiving to the Holy Ghost for His share in building up the Church of Christ, and the providence with which He rules over her, guarding her from error, and guiding her in justice and holiness "*for the perfecting of the saints*," *&c.* (*Eph.* iv. 12).

Consult Theology; also Guillet's "Projets d'Instructions," Inst. xxviii. Also read the Liturgy of the Church for the Vigil, Feast and Octave of Pentecost, in order to find appropriate phraseology for the subject. Also consult Butler's "Feasts and Fasts," Whitsuntide.

TWENTY-FIFTH DISCOURSE
ON
THE APOSTLES' CREED;
AND
THIRD ON EIGHTH ARTICLE.

"*I believe in the Holy Ghost.*"

Introduction.

We have seen that the works of Divine mercy, love, and goodness are ascribed to the Holy Ghost. On this account the sanctification of our souls being pre-eminently a work of Divine mercy, love, and goodness, that work is in a special manner the office of the Holy Ghost. Hence St. Paul says — "*The charity of God is poured forth in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, who is given to us*" (*Rom.* v. 5). This charity of God is, in other words, the grace of God, or the means of our sanctification, which as it is imparted to us, becomes "a fountain of living water springing up into life everlasting." Therefore, after considering the work of the Holy Ghost in reference to the Church at large, it will be more than interesting to bestow some thoughts on the action He exercises on the souls of the faithful, individually, for their sanctification. How deeply concerned are we not in this subject? Our eternity depends upon it, for, as we hope to be glorified in the life to come, we must be in a state of sanctification, or, as we may otherwise say, in a state of grace, leaving this life.

[Engage attention, and ask a blessing.]

Body of the Subject.

1. Our sanctification, what does it mean? It means, *first*, our passage out of a state of sin, whether original or actual sin, into a state of grace; and, *secondly*, our continuing in a state of grace. This passage from a state of sin to a state of grace, and our continuing in a state of grace, is the work of the Holy Ghost, in our souls—a work which He accomplishes within us by His Divine grace. It is, therefore, a matter of supreme importance, in treating of the Holy Ghost, to understand what this grace is, by which He accomplishes our sanctification in the first instance, and maintains it afterwards.

2. Grace in its general signification is—(define it). It is variously distinguished; but Theologians call our attention particularly to the distinction between actual and habitual grace; (define both and go on to say that)—with this distinction before our minds we proceed to inquire respecting actual grace; how far it is necessary; that is, how far we stand in need of it. In this inquiry, we must view it under two distinct aspects—first, in reference to itself; and, secondly, in reference to habitual grace.

3. As we view it in itself, the sun gives us an idea of its necessity, or the need we have of it. We stand in need of the sun's light and heat, so do we stand in need of the Holy Ghost to enlighten our understanding, and influence our will by His grace. To form an idea of how much we stand in need of the Holy Ghost for the enlightenment of the understanding, it will be necessary to take account of what our understandings are capable of without the assistance of grace. We know that, as an effect of original sin, the understandings of men became darkened; nevertheless this darkness was not absolute. It left some light remaining, and in this remaining light we are capable of knowing some truths, such as the existence of God, and some obligations, such as the primary principles of the natural law. But of ourselves, and unassisted by Divine grace, we are unable to frame out of this knowledge a system of doctrine necessary for our guidance in the duties we owe to God, our neighbour, and ourselves. Consequently, beyond the natural range of our understanding, unaided by grace, there is a dreary void, or labyrinth, in which we require the light of Divine grace to guide our steps, and show us the way in which we are to walk. Hence the Psalmist exclaims—"*Thy word is a lamp to my feet, and a light to my paths.*" (*Ps.* cxviii. 105). In vain do the greatest talents try to find their way through this misty region. Hence, what wanderings and strayings are before us in history—wanderings and strayings so great, as to exceed in absurdity the most absurd reveries, as St. Augustine observes, that ever passed through the brain of a sick man suffering the delirium of a burning fever. Yes; history lies before us, to attest the limited extent to which our understanding can lead us in the investigation of truth, and the consequent necessity we have of additional light to know our duties towards God, our neighbour, and ourselves. Now, this additional light is supplied us by the grace afforded us by the Holy Ghost. Hence we see how great is the need we have of this grace for the enlightenment of our understanding.

4. The grace of the Holy Ghost is no less necessary as a help to our will to do good. As the understanding of man was darkened by the fall of our first parents, so was his will impaired in its power of doing good. As man revolted against his Creator, so the inferior part of his nature rose in rebellion against himself. Therefore it is, that we find ourselves in a state of warfare with ourselves. "*Man's life*," says Holy Job, "*is a warfare on earth*" (vii. 1). Now, to fight in this warfare, we have been left some natural strength even in our fallen state. We are, indeed, capable of doing some good acts in the natural order without the assistance of the grace of the Holy Ghost. We can, indeed, of ourselves fulfil some of the easier duties of the natural law. We can, indeed, love God as the Author of nature, with some degree of imperfect love, as we can also overcome some lesser temptations. So far we can go of ourselves without the assistance of Divine grace. But beyond this limit—to fulfil all the precepts of the natural law, or even the more difficult ones amongst them—to love God, even as the Author of nature, with a perfect love—to overcome temptations of a stronger kind—here is a sphere of good and evil, in which the will of man is utterly insufficient for doing the one or resisting the other, unless aided by the grace of the Holy Ghost. His natural prudence and wisdom count as nought—no education, civilization, or refinement is of any avail to fill up the void of human insufficiency. Again, we have the history of mankind open to us. There were great philosophers, great legislators, great heroes in the world at different periods, and at no period more than at the time of ancient Greece and Rome, and what is the testimony we have of their morals? Read St. Paul. After describing certain vices to which they were addicted—vices too odious to be mentioned without a shudder—he exhibits them as men "*filled with all iniquity, malice, fornication, avarice*," *&c., &c.* (*Rom.* i. 29, 30, 31). So sadly insufficient are all the resources of nature and artificial culture, to regulate the morals of man without the aid of the Holy Ghost, and His grace from on High.

5. But if in the things of the natural order man be so deficient in the light of the understanding for the knowledge of truth, and in the power of his will for the love and practice of virtue, he is utterly blind and powerless in the supernatural order, except so far as he is aided by Divine grace. In his

understanding what he is, St. Paul tells us in his Second Epistle to the Corinthians (chap. iii. 5), "*Not that we are sufficient to think anything of ourselves, as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is from God.*" Such is the state of our understanding in the way of salvation, that we are utterly blind, and as well might a blind man hope to make his way through a complicated city abounding in ways and cross-ways, as we could hope to find our way to heaven through the mazes and intricacies of this life without the light of the Holy Ghost beaming on our understanding by His grace.

And as to our power of doing good in the way of salvation, our Divine Lord tells us explicitly we can do nothing, absolutely nothing, without His assistance, that is, the assistance of His grace poured out upon our souls by the Holy Ghost, "*Without Me you can do nothing*" (*John* xv. 5), nothing—absolutely nothing; and to impress this truth still more deeply on the minds of all Christians, He explained it by comparison of a vine and its branches.—(**Bring out the comparison**).

Sentiments of humility and self-abasement in view of our insufficiency, and the need we have of Divine grace.

6. So far we have been considering the subject of *actual* grace in itself, and the necessity we have of it. We now proceed to speak of it in reference to *habitual* grace.

Habitual grace, as we have already seen, is: (**repeat**).

We are to consider it under two aspects. First, with respect to a man passing from a state of sin into a state of habitual grace; and secondly, with respect to a man continuing in a state of habitual grace, and we are taught by our holy faith, that in both cases actual grace is necessary. As regards his passage out of a state of sin, whether original or actual—so far from being capable of accomplishing this passage of himself, he is incapable even of preparing or disposing himself for it, unless he is first prompted, and afterwards helped on by Divine actual grace. So true is this that it would be heresy to assert the contrary. (**Quote** *John* vi. 44), (*Phil.* ii. 13), *Council of Trent* (*Sess.* vi. *Can.* 3).

7. And as we require the assistance of actual grace to attain an habitual state of grace, so we require the same assistance to persevere to the end in that state, and not only so, but we require a more than ordinary—a special assistance

of actual grace. This is a defined article of our faith, for the Council of Trent declares it (*Sess.* vi. *Can.* 22). In like manner do we require a special supply of actual grace to avoid all venial sins, for any considerable time. (Quote *James* iii. 2, 1 *John* i. 8, Council of Trent, *Sess.* vi. *Can.* 23).

8. And whilst we stand in need of God's actual grace to keep us in a state of habitual grace, we require this same assistance to a certain extent for every good act we perform in a state of grace, as well to begin it, as to continue it, as also to accomplish it. It is on this account we distinguish the actual graces we receive for doing good into "*preventing graces*"—going before the act; "*accompanying graces*"—going along with the act; and "*subsequent graces*"—assuring its full completion. (Quote "*Imitation of Christ*," B. iii., c. lv. 4).

We are like an infirm person, unable to walk of himself. He requires assistance to begin, to continue, and to come to an end in his effort to accomplish a movement from one place to another.

St. Augustine, whom the Church presents to us as the great oracle of orthodoxy on the subject of grace, furnishes a most instructive lesson to us in his "Soliloquies," on the need we have of grace in the way of salvation. Addressing himself to God, the holy doctor prays as follows:—"O most powerful and omnipotent God, teach me how I am to confess to Thee, that, whereas I have said that I was rich and in want of nothing, I did not know that I was poor, and blind, and naked, wretched and miserable. But Thou hast opened my eyes, and I have seen that man's life is a warfare on earth, and that no flesh can boast in Thy sight, because if there be anything of good in us, be it little or great, it is Thine, and of our own we have nothing but what is evil. Therefore the glory is Thine, O Lord, to Whom belongs all that is good, and for us there remains naught but confusion of face and misery, unless in so far as Thou art pleased to have mercy upon us. For Thou hast mercy upon us, and Thou enrichest us with Thy best gifts, since Thou lovest the poor, and makest them rich with Thy own riches. Therefore, I confess unto Thee, O Lord, my poverty; I confess to Thee, since Thou hast Thyself taught me, that I am nothing else than misery, vanity, the shadow of death, a darksome abyss, a void and empty land, producing nothing without Thy blessing, unless confusion, sin, and death. If I have had any

thing good, at any time, I have received it from Thee; if I have stood erect at any time, I have stood by Thy help; and when I fell, I fell by myself, and falling, I should have for ever remained in the mire, unless Thou hadst lifted me up; and when Thou hadst lifted me up, again must I have fallen, unless Thou hadst sustained me; and many times should I have perished, hadst Thou not protected me. So, O Lord, hath Thy grace constantly prevented me, delivering me from all evil, saving me from the past, lifting me up from the present, and defending me from the future, cutting up before me the snares of sin, removing the occasions and causes, because if Thou hadst not done so, I would have committed all the sins of the whole world. Because I know, O Lord, that there is no one sin which any man has committed, that another man would not commit, if the Creator, by Whom man is made, were to withdraw Himself from His creature."

At the sight of such a picture what reason have we not to cry out with the Psalmist, "*Unless the Lord had been my helper, my soul had almost dwelt in hell*" (xciii. 17); or, with St. Augustine himself, "Thou hast, O Lord, saved me from hell, a first time, a second time, a third time, a hundred times, a thousand times; for I was always tending to hell, and Thou wert always keeping me back, and a thousand times Thou mightest have damned me if Thou hadst wished."—*Soliloquies.*

Conclusion.

To bring this very important subject to a conclusion, we are to recollect the following points:

1st. Grace is so necessary in the natural order, that without it we should be incapable of systematizing all we could know into a body of doctrine, sufficient for our guidance in our duties towards God, our neighbours, and ourselves.

2ndly. We should likewise be incapable of loving God, with a perfect love, even as the Author of nature.

3rdly. We should, moreover, be incapable of resisting the stronger temptations, and observing all the precepts of the natural law.

4thly. As to the supernatural order, man, without the assistance of actual grace, would be incapable of passing out of a state of sin into a state of habitual grace, or of even disposing himself for this passage.

5thly. After having entered into a state of habitual grace, he still stands in need of actual grace for doing good in the way of salvation, and requires, moreover, special, that is, more than ordinary graces to avoid all venial sins, and to keep from mortal sin to the end of his life.

How much, therefore, are we in the hands of the Holy Ghost in all our ways through life? What should not be our devotion to this Divine Spirit? How should we not constantly invoke Him to enlighten and assist us by His holy grace; but above all how should we not constantly beg of Him to bestow upon us that grace of graces—the grace of final perseverance, which insures for us the end for which all graces are bestowed—Eternal Life.

Consult Theology, and read the Liturgy of the Church for the Eve, Festival, and Octave of Pentecost, in order to find appropriate phraseology.

Consult also Butler's "Feasts and Fasts," Whitsuntide.

TWENTY-SIXTH DISCOURSE

ON

THE APOSTLES' CREED;

AND

FOURTH ON EIGHTH ARTICLE.

"I believe in the Holy Ghost."

Introduction.

In our last discourse we occupied ourselves in considering the action of the Holy Ghost in the sanctification of our souls by means of His Divine grace. We considered what grace was, in the general import of the word, and we went into the distinction between actual and habitual grace. In pursuing the subject, we examined how far we stand in need of actual grace, and we saw in how many various ways it is necessary for us to aid our infirmity both in the natural and supernatural order, and we ended by noticing the special nature of the grace of

final perseverance, that crowning grace, that puts an end to our warfare here upon earth, and insures for us the victory of salvation. From these considerations of the need we have of Divine grace, we proceed this evening to bestow some reflections on the advantages afforded us by the Holy Ghost in granting us these graces, so that if we have reason to feel humbled by the consideration of our own helplessness and proneness to sin, we have reason, on the other hand, to be comforted by being assured that the Divine Spirit is always ready to aid our infirmity by His Divine grace, and so enable us not only to make head against our sinful propensities, but to advance with a steady pace in the way of salvation.

[Engage attention and beg a blessing.]

Body of the Subject.

1. Not only is He bountiful in His graces to the soul already in a state of grace, that we may persevere, but also to the sinner, that he may be converted. O, how consoling are the assurances the Holy Ghost gives us on this subject? O, let the sinner listen with attentive ear to the words of mercy the Holy Ghost would address to him:—Quote (1 *Cor.* x. 13); (2 *Peter* iii. 9); (*Ezech.* xxxiii. 11); (*Isaias* i. 18, and xxxviii. 17, lv. 7); (*Joel* ii. 13); (*Zach.* i. 3).

N.B.—Arrange these quotations according to their force, with a word of comment on each, and if you have time refer to the Parable of the Good Shepherd, the Prodigal, and the fact of the Woman caught in Adultery, Mary Magdalen, the Penitent Thief; ending with the general conclusion, that there is no sinner on earth, however numerous and grievous his sins may be, for whom there is not the grace of pardon provided by the Holy Ghost, if only on his part he will be converted.

2. And if the arms of God's mercy be open, and His grace be in readiness for the repentant sinner, how much more abundant are the graces He has in readiness for those who are already in a state of grace. Quote (*Rom.* v. 8, 9, 10). Yes; our life may be a warfare upon earth, as holy Job declares it to be, and our wrestling may be, as St. Paul declares it to be, "*not against flesh and blood*," *&c.* (*Ephes* vi. 12.) We may have an interior struggle of the spirit against the flesh and the flesh against the spirit—a law in our members fighting against the law of our minds. Yet we have to fear nothing, if only we have recourse

to Divine grace, "*for if God be with us, who is against us?*" (*Rom.* viii. 31). "*He is faithful*," says St. Paul, "*and will not allow us to be tempted above our strength*" (1 *Cor.* x. 13); but will, by the power of His grace, bring us off victorious out of all our conflicts, so that we may say, relying on His grace, with the Psalmist (xlv. 2, 3), for "*the Lord of armies*," *&c.* (*Ibid.* 12).

3. Having said so much as to the sufficiency in which Divine grace is provided for all men—sinners as well as those already in a state of grace—I must not omit observing, that Divine grace, powerful though it is, and carrying with it into our souls the Omnipotence of God to a certain extent, does not, at the same time, overcome our free will either in accepting it, or acting in correspondence with it. We always maintain our freedom of action, and whilst the Holy Ghost, rich in mercy and abounding in goodness, sometimes urges and presses us to accept His graces, He never does so to the extent of compelling us contrary to our own wills. He expressly declares Himself to this effect. Quote (*Eccles.* xxxi. 10); (2 *Cor.* vi. 1), and Council of Trent (*Sess.* vi. *Can.* 4).

4. It only remains to say a few words upon how the Holy Ghost offers us His graces. Our Divine Lord compares them to water springing up to everlasting life (*John* iv. 14). Now, we are supplied with water in two ways: by rain descending from the clouds, and by springs issuing from the bowels of the earth, and in both cases the sea is the great source of supply. So, in some sort, it is with Divine grace. The source of supply are the merits of our Saviour's passion and death. And from this source the supply comes, partly by springs of a supernatural kind, which we find chiefly in prayer, in the Word of God, and in the Holy Sacraments; and partly it comes down upon us, as dew and rain poured out upon us, and conveyed to our hearts, as St. Paul says, by the Holy Ghost who is given us (*Rom.* v. 5).

We may otherwise divide these graces into external and internal. The external are chiefly prayer, the Word of God, and the Holy Sacraments, as already mentioned; the internal graces are those which are immediately furnished to the soul by the Holy Ghost within us. They consist of certain lights, which occasionally beam on our souls, giving us a clearer knowledge of our duties, and enlightening us according to the wants and needs we have of them. They consist, at other times, of certain

impulses we feel within us, urging us forward to do some good works, and refrain from evil works to which we are tempted. They consist again of admonitions, encouragements, remorses, reproaches, &c., which we have, as from a secret monitor, speaking to us within our hearts, &c.

It is of these kinds of grace the Holy Ghost speaks when He warns us, saying, "*To-day if you hear the voice of the Lord, harden not your hearts*," *&c.* (*Psalm* xciv. 8).

Conclusion.

Looking back upon our subject, we see that the Holy Ghost offers His graces to all men—so that all men, even the worst sinners, have within their reach sufficient graces to work out their salvation. We have, moreover, noticed that we remain always free to receive or reject Divine grace; and finally, we indicated the sources from which, and the modes of supply through which, the Holy Ghost furnishes His graces to our souls.

It only remains that we address ourselves to this Divine Spirit with all thankfulness for the past, and confidence for the future, resolved on our part to correspond and co-operate with His mercy and goodness and love in the graces He bestows upon us, that living a life of grace here, we may be admitted to a life of glory hereafter. Amen.

Consult Theology, and read the Liturgy of the Church for the Eve, Festival, and Octave of Pentecost, in order to find appropriate phraseology; also Butler's "Feasts and Fasts," Whitsuntide.

TWENTY-SEVENTH DISCOURSE

ON

THE APOSTLES' CREED;

AND

FIFTH ON EIGHTH ARTICLE.

"*I believe in the Holy Ghost.*"

Introduction.

In our two last discourses we treated of the beneficent action of the Holy Ghost on the faithful individually for the sanctification of our souls. But the subject is yet far from being exhausted. We resume it, therefore, in God's name, this evening.

It is by the graces the Holy Ghost bestows upon us that He accomplishes our sanctification, and those graces, as we have seen, are of two kinds—actual and habitual graces. The former were chiefly the subject of our two last discourses, and therefore we are to take up the latter, that is, habitual grace, as our subject this evening. To dispose ourselves for a subject of such importance, let us confess, that of ourselves we are not sufficient to think anything as of ourselves, as St. Paul admonishes us, but all our sufficiency is from God.

Therefore, let us address the Holy Ghost, saying (**Here recite a strophe of the "Veni Sancte Spiritus,"** from the Mass of the Holy Ghost).

Body of the Subject.

1. *Habitual grace.*—Behold the subject we are going to treat of. Habitual grace, as you have already heard it defined, is (**define it**). In other words, it is in receiving habitual grace the sinner passes in the first place out of a state of sin, original or actual, into a state of grace or holiness; and in the second place, it is by persevering in the same habitual grace he maintains himself in that happy state of grace or holiness.

To treat the subject with due regard to order, we will divide it into three parts. The first part will present to us a soul passing out of a state of sin into a state of grace. The second will give us a soul already in a state of grace; and in the third

division we will see the effects ordinarily produced by the Holy Ghost in such a soul. However, before entering on these divisions, it may be well to observe that the entire subject is of an essentially spiritual character—a subject that presents nothing to the eyes to see, nor to the ears to hear, nor to the hands to touch. We must endeavour, therefore, with God's assistance, to grasp it with our understandings, using, as we must necessarily use in all such subjects, terms and expressions, which take their primary meaning from material objects, and have a secondary meaning applicable to spiritual things, on account of the similarity we detect between things material and things spiritual.

2. First, then, we are to consider a soul taken out of a state of sin, whether original or actual, and translated into a state of grace. What a spectacle! What a process! It has two stages. The first is the expulsion of the devil out of the soul. Yes, it must be stated, horrible though it is, that a soul in the state of sin is occupied by the devil as a dwelling, where he abides for the time being. Let us listen to our Divine Lord on the matter:—"*When*," says He, "*the unclean spirit, &c., &c.* (*Luke* xi. 24-26). (Quote the passage fully). What a fearful description! See, first, the unclean spirit—the devil—going out of a man; see him, secondly, coming back as a person returning to his house—"*I will return to my house whence I came out*," says he, and, lastly, see him enter again into the same man, &c. How dreadful! Yet this is the account given by our Divine Saviour Himself.

We have the same idea presented to us by the ceremonies of the Sacrament of Baptism.

Here bring forward—first, the insufflations, with the accompanying words:—"*Exi ab eo*," *&c.*; secondly, the exorcisms, "*Exorciso te*;" thirdly, the sign of the cross on the forehead, with the words, "*Et hoc Signum*," *&c.* Horrid, therefore, though the thought is, we must hold and teach that a soul in the state of sin is for the time being the abode of Satan. (Words of horror).

3. And without proceeding further, let me bring under your notice what I am sure many of you may have observed—the strange fact, as it may appear, that persons leading bad lives, and living on in a neglect of their religious duties, feel often quite at ease with themselves, whereas many persons leading

virtuous lives, and attending to their religious duties, are sometimes greatly tormented with temptations. But, after all, is this a strange and unaccountable wonder? By no means. An enemy in possession of a city will be at peace with its inhabitants after having subdued them, and it is only when he is storming the city, or when an effort is made to expel him, that he uses violence. (**Apply the comparison**).

4. And when we say that a soul in the state of sin is the abode of the devil for the time being, we are further to consider that it may not be a single evil spirit that is there. In the passage I have quoted, our Saviour speaks of the unclean spirit introducing seven other spirits more wicked than himself into a man, when he returns to resume possession of him. And how can we forget that passage of the Gospel in which our Divine Lord cast a legion of evil spirits out of the one man. (*Mark* v.)

Recite the whole passage, and bring out the fact of the two thousand, and close by saying—Don't ask me how could so many evil spirits be contained in one poor being. They are spirits, and as such they require no room like bodies, and any number of them can be together in any amount of space, however limited, at the same time.

It is further to be observed, as we see in the Gospel, and as we know from history, that these evil spirits do not always confine their wickedness to the soul, which, however, is the chief object of their malice, but by the permission of God they afflict and torment the poor bodies of those they have possession of. (**Sensation.**)

But we must go back and say, that as a soul in sin is in the possession of the devil, the first stage of its passage into a state of grace must be the expulsion of the devil from within it, and this is the first great work of the Holy Ghost in bringing a soul out of the state of sin into a state of habitual or sanctifying grace.

5. The second stage of the process is to cleanse the soul from the filth and uncleanness with which the devil had defiled it whilst abiding in it. It is easy to understand that if an occupant of nasty, filthy habits had possessed a house for any time, the house would need a thorough cleansing out on his leaving it. So must it be with the soul, when the Holy Ghost has banished the devil from within the sinner. Yes, he must undergo a thorough cleansing. For is not the devil everywhere

called the unclean spirit? Yes, he is the very essence of uncleanness, so disgusting, that if all the uncleanness of the whole world were put into one mass of filth, it would be an object delightful to look at compared with the devil.

Therefore, when he has been expelled from within the sinner, the poor sinner requires, as I have said, a thorough cleansing. Is not this what we are taught by the Holy Ghost Himself, in His own declarations, as we find them in several parts of the Holy Scriptures.

Here quote *Isai.* i. 16, iv. 4; *Psalms* l. 9; *Acts* xxii. 16; 1 *Cor.* vi. 11, applying each with a word or two to bring out the point that the soul, after having got rid of the devil, requires to be cleansed of the defilements of sin, and this is the second work of the Holy Ghost in translating a sinner from the state of sin to a state of habitual or sanctifying grace. (Expressions of thanks to the Holy Ghost).

Observe that it is through means of the Sacraments of Baptism and Penance that the Holy Ghost effects this wondrous work of mercy, goodness, and love, using the Sacrament of Baptism for those who are not yet baptized, and the Sacrament of Penance for those who have the misfortune of falling into mortal sin after Baptism.

6. In the second division of our subject we proposed to consider a soul actually translated into a state of habitual grace. What, then, is the state of such a soul? When in sin it was the habitation of Satan, or a den of unclean spirits. The Holy Ghost has expelled them, and He has washed that soul from the defilements and filth she was in. What then does He do? O, how delightful to think: He enters the soul Himself, and makes it His own abode! O, what bounty, &c. Who could believe it, if He did not Himself assure us that it is an absolute fact.

Here quote 1 *Cor.* iii. 17, vi. 19; 2 *Cor.* vi. 16; *Rom.* viii. 11; applying each text so as to bring out the point in view, namely, that the Holy Ghost establishes His abode in the soul, when He has expelled the evil spirit out of it, and purified it from the filth of sin.

7. Nor is the Holy Ghost the sole occupant of the soul, but He is joined by the other two Persons of the Most Holy Trinity, not only according to that union of circuminsession by being one and the same God, but in a special way, which we cannot explain, but which our Divine Lord mentions, when He says in the Gospel, "*If any one love Me*," as is surely the case of a soul possessing the Holy Ghost within it, "*My Father will love him, and We will come to him, and take up our abode with him.*"

(*John* xiv. 23). O, happy that soul! delightful spectacle in the eyes of the angels in heaven—man here upon earth to be the abode of the Three Divine Persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

8. *The effects produced by the Holy Ghost in a soul in the state of grace.*

The Divine Spirit enters the soul not to be idle there, but to bestow upon it the effects of His bounty, mercy and love.

1st Effect. A complete renewal of our souls, by which not only our sins are remitted, but our souls are beautified with the rich embellishments of Divine grace. (Quote 1 *Cor.* vi. 11; *Conc. Trent, Sess.* vi. *Cap.* 7). "Non est solum peccatorum remissio, sed et sanctificatio et renovatio interioris hominis;" and again, "*Renovamini spiritu mentis vestrae.*" (*Eph.* iv. 23).

This renovation and beautifying of the soul consist, 1st, in the infused virtues of Faith, Hope, and Charity; 2ndly, in the moral virtues according to the general opinion of theologians; 3rdly, in the gifts of the Holy Ghost; 4thly, in the fruits of the Holy Ghost. With these embellishments, rich and beautiful beyond all earthly ornamentation, does the Divine Spirit renew and beautify the soul as He takes possession of it, whereby as the Catechism of the Council of Trent expresses it, "He diffuses a light and splendour through all the powers and faculties of our souls, rendering them thereby more beautiful and splendid."

2nd Effect. We are made children of God. (*John* i. 12, 13; *Rom.* viii. 15, 16; *Galat.* iv. 4, 5; 1 *John* iii. 1).

3rd Effect. We are made heirs of the Kingdom of Heaven. (*Gal.* iv. 7; *Rom.* viii. 17; *Tit.* iii. 7; 1 *Pet.* iii. 22).

4th Effect. We are made partakers of the Divine nature, (2 *Pet.* i. 4; *John* xv. 5; *Heb.* iii. 14), with comment of "Triplex Expositio" thereon, "*Da nobis per hujus aquæ et vini,*" *&c.*, *Liturgy* at mingling water with wine at Mass; where observe not only the words but the symbol: *Cat. Conc. Trid. De Baptismo, No.* 50. "*Est autem gratia,*" *&c.* (Quote in full in English, as also the other references). How are we to explain these wonderful effects? Even the most enlightened theologians confessed themselves stammering, as it were, in their effort to explain them. Imitating their humility, I can only say what they say—that by the Holy Ghost abiding in us, we become partakers in a special manner of the nature and life of God, so

that partaking of His nature we are raised to the supernatural order, and partaking of His life our souls live the life of God in some degree, as our bodies are animated by our souls, or as the branch, according to the comparison of our Saviour, lives the life of the vine that bears it. Thus the soul becomes deified according to the words of the Psalmist, "*I have said: You are gods and all of you the sons of the Most High*" (*Ps.* lxxxi. 6), and we are invested, in some degree, with the perfections of God, with His Wisdom, Fortitude, Constancy, Justice, Charity, and other Attributes, which He communicates to us by His grace. **(Sentiments of wonder, &c.)**

It is to be observed that the various effects produced in a soul in a state of grace, though various, are not successive, as if one followed another with an interval between. They are produced simultaneously, somewhat in the manner, as St. Thomas would illustrate the process, in which light expels darkness as it enters into an apartment, from which it was excluded.

9. Having said so much on this most important subject of habitual or sanctifying grace, we have further to add, that it may be unequal, existing in degrees of more or less in different persons, that it is susceptible of increase in the same person, and liable to be altogether lost by mortal sin. Hence it is of the greatest importance to understand the means whereby we are to preserve it, and even to increase it. There are chiefly three means for this purpose, which have been already inculcated, namely, Prayer, the Word of God, and the Sacraments. With regard to the Sacraments, we are to observe that they are instituted only for occasional use, except the Sacraments of Penance and the Blessed Eucharist, which are for our more ordinary use. These Blessed Sacraments are, in the spiritual life, in the nature of medicine and food. And as it is by medicine and food we maintain our corporal life, health and strength, so by Penance we apply a spiritual medicine to our souls, and by the food of the Holy Eucharist we receive increased strength, to fortify our souls for accomplishing the great task of our salvation.

Conclusion.

Recapitulate the several points, and exhort as follows:—

Let us, therefore, be devoted to Prayer and the hearing the Word of God, and with these holy practices let us join the

frequentation of the Holy Sacraments. This is all the more incumbent upon us, as we never can know for certain whether we are in a state of grace or not. Oh! that dreadful sentence, "*Man knoweth not whether he be worthy of love or hatred*" (*Eccles.* ix. 1). Therefore we are to work out our salvation in fear and trembling, co-operating in all humility and fervour with the graces of the Holy Ghost, and thereby sending merit before us to the world to come, so that on leaving this miserable world we may deserve to hear from the Divine Judge the delightful invitation, "*Well done, thou good and faithful servant,*" *&c., &c.*

Consult Theology, on Grace.

Read the Liturgy for the Vigil, Feast and Octave of Pentecost, to select appropriate phraseology for the subject; consult also Butler's "Feasts and Fasts," Whitsuntide.

TWENTY-EIGHTH DISCOURSE

ON

THE APOSTLES' CREED;

AND

FIRST ON NINTH ARTICLE.

"*I believe in the Holy Catholic Church, the Communion of Saints.*"

Introduction.

These words present to us the Ninth Article of the Apostles' Creed. The previous Articles have reference to God and to the Blessed Trinity. In treating of the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, we spoke of His Incarnation, His Passion, and Death, His glorious Resurrection and admirable Ascension. But we saw that, before withdrawing His visible presence from amongst mankind, He established a new religion upon earth, and appointed Pastors who were to preach and propagate that religion—promising that He Himself would be with them, if not in visible form, at least equally effectually, till the end of time. "*Going therefore,*" said He to them, "*teach all nations,*" *&c., &c.* (*Matt.* xxviii. 19).

The professors of this religion founded by our Saviour were called Christians, almost from the very beginning; and, in their collective capacity, constituted what is universally known as the Church of Christ. It is this great Institution, the Apostles' Creed, in the Article I have quoted, presents to us, and together with it the Communion of Saints. The latter part of the Article we shall reserve for another discourse, and we shall confine ourselves, at present, to the first point of the Article, namely—"*I believe in the Holy Catholic Church.*" How important is not this subject! We all profess ourselves to be disciples of Jesus Christ. His is the only name under heaven given to men, whereby we must be saved (*Acts* iv. 12), and it is in belonging to the religion He has established on earth, and in belonging to the Church which maintains that religion, that His ever-adorable Name will be to us a name of salvation.

Let us, therefore, beg of Him, who is the Light that enlighteneth every man that cometh into this world, that He will enlighten us to conceive true ideas, and cling to true principles and doctrine, on so important a subject.

Body of the Subject.

1. Were we to go back in thought to consider our Divine Lord planning the establishment of His Church, we should all say—first, that the members of it should acknowledge Him as their head; secondly, that they should believe and profess the doctrine He had taught; thirdly, that they should practise the religious worship He had instituted; and, fourthly, that they should be subject to the ruling authorities He had constituted for the teaching of His doctrine, the administration of His religious worship, and the upholding order and proper government amongst the members, as constituting an organised society. Thus, from the very idea we should have of the Church of Christ before even it was established, we should conceive it to be a Society of persons on earth believing in the doctrine of Christ, practising the religious observances instituted by Christ, and subject to the pastors and rulers whom He placed over them; which idea corresponds with the definition our Catechism gives us of the Church, namely: (**Here give definition**).

2. In instituting a religion, and a Church to uphold that religion, our Divine Saviour wished both one and the other

should never fail till the end of time; in other words, that it should be perpetual and indefectible. (**A text or two from Scripture,** *and a couple of passages from the Holy Fathers in proof.*)

3. Not only did He establish His Church to be perpetual and indefectible, but also to be always visible, so that every one could easily and securely know it.

Prove briefly, but forcibly, insisting in the end, that it was particularly necessary that the Church should be visible, on account of the poor and illiterate, who are special favourites of heaven.

4. But, that the Church of Christ be always visible, it was necessary at all times, as it is at the present day, that it should have certain distinct and obvious marks or signs, by which it could easily be known, not only by the enlightened and well-educated portion of mankind, but by the poor, simple, and illiterate of our fellow-creatures. And, in point of fact, it was designed by our Divine Lord in founding the Church, that it always should have such marks or signs, which, in the language of Theology, are called the *Notes* of the Church. These are, as expressed in the Nicene Creed, which is said at Mass, that the Church is One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic. The Apostles' Creed mentions only two of these, namely, that the Church is Holy and Catholic; but it may be well remarked that she cannot be Holy and Catholic without being, at the same time, One and Apostolic; so that the Nicene Creed is only a more developed expression of what is contained in the Apostles' Creed.

5. Well, then, the Church of God must be, according to its institution, One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic. It is unnecessary to occupy your time in proving the necessity of these *Notes.* They are admitted by all the different denominations of Christians, at least by all the more respectable amongst them, who differ from us, since they all admit the Nicene Creed. It will be more profitable to examine these *Notes,* and see how they are found in the Church, to which we have the happiness to belong, *i.e.*, the Church in connection and communion with Rome.

6. To proceed, therefore, in order, we will first consider the note of unity, consisting in the Church being One.

Go on to say ONE in so and so, repeating ONE before each condition of unity, and illustrating these various conditions in the Church. Take the same course with the other Notes, exhibiting

them briefly, and in their prominent features, passing over minute distinctions, and all discussions; and having come to the end you will add, that having seen that the various marks, by which our Divine Lord wished to render His Church visible to all men, are distinctly impressed on the Church in communion with Rome, it should appear that all further controversy is unnecessary. For, if our Divine Lord established a Church, as He most certainly did, and if He established only one Church, and it is most certain He established only one, and if our Church displays before all men the signs by which He ordained that one Church to be known, can anything be more clear than that our Church, and it alone, is the true Church of Christ?

7. But, to give those who differ from us all possible indulgence of argument, let us apply to them the notes which they admit to belong to the true Church of Christ. Are they one? Certainly not one with us. The branch is no longer one with the tree, when lopped off. It is fit only to be gathered up and cast into the fire. So with all these various denominations of Christians we see around us. They were originally lopped off from us, and then divided into various branches amongst themselves—Lutherans, Calvinists (go through an enumeration, and end with saying)—as well might it be said there was unity of language in the confusion of Babel, as to say there is unity of doctrine, or anything else, between these various denominations calling themselves Christians.

8. Treat the other Notes in the same popular way, and in the end remark—that these various sectaries try by cunning and elaborate distinctions to make it appear their sects are *part* of the Church of Christ—Whereupon observe were such the case, then indeed, St. Paul would have asked in vain, "*Is Christ divided?*"—(1 *Cor.* i. 13), to give separate heads to bodies so differing from each other. But elaborate distinctions have no place in the present argument. We are treating of an institution, which is as much and more the institution of the poor than of the rich, of the illiterate than of the learned, and would it not be blasphemy to assert that our Divine Lord would say, "I have established a Church for you, poor illiterate people, but a Church such as you cannot make out, because it requires learning and enlightenment, which you have not, to discover it?"

Proceed to speak of the necessity of belonging to the true Church in order to be saved, by a couple of texts and quotations from the Fathers, without any formal argument; and point out cases of exception. Meet the objection of illiberality by saying, we do what Noe would have done to any of his family, if they showed unwillingness to enter the Ark.

Conclusion.

Wind up with a recapitulation to the effect, that Christ established a Church, but only one Church. It was to be everlasting and always visible. For this purpose, it was to be distinguished by being *One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic*. These notes are conspicuous in the Catholic Church in communion with Rome, and nowhere else. All are bound under pain of damnation to belong to this One, Holy and True Church.

Thank God for having the great blessing of belonging to it, &c., &c.

Consult Theology, "De Ecclesia;" Bishop Hay's "Sincere Christian," chaps. xii., xiii.; Guillet's "Projets d'Instructions," xxxi. Inst.

N.B.—Try by all means to give a popular form to the whole discourse, avoiding minute distinctions and details. With this view you can substitute, if you prefer it, what follows, for No. 7.

But, to give those who differ from us every possible indulgence in argument, we would address them as follows:—You, each and all claim to be the Church of Christ. Well, then, if your churches be each the Church of Christ, it must manifestly be that which Christ Himself and His Apostles instituted, and which has continued since amongst mankind on earth to the present time. Now come forward and I will ask you, one after another, a few simple questions: and first I would address the Lutherans, and ask them, "Lutherans, who founded your Church? Luther, was it not? But surely Luther was not Christ, nor one of His Apostles. And at what period of the world was your Church founded? In the 16th century, was it not? That is about 300 years ago; well, then, it cannot be Christ's Church which He Himself and His Apostles founded more than 1800 years ago. And you, Calvinists, who was your founder? John Calvin, was it not? But surely you do not pretend that John Calvin was Christ, or an Apostle of Christ, and he lived at the same time as Luther, that is 1500 years and upwards, too late to afford any claim in point of time in favour of your Church. And you Quakers, John Fox was your founder; and you Socinians, you boast of Socinus as your great father in the faith. And the rest of you, all and each, your title tells—does it not?—that you are sprung of the individuals whose names respectively you bear, and that your origin

is still later than Luther and Calvin. What pretension, under Heaven, can you have to be the Church that was founded more than 1800 years ago, and by Christ Himself and His Apostles? Compare your churches just for a moment with the Catholic Church in communion with Rome. See that venerable old Church, with its Popes in unbroken succession from St. Peter, age after age, to the present Pontiff, in the same way as king succeeds king in a kingdom from the first of his dynasty. All your pretensions fall to the ground and come to naught in the contrast of your little sects, which are only of the other day, with that venerable Institution, the Catholic Church, with the Pope at its head, which has outlasted the changes and storms and persecutions of eighteen centuries, and presents itself in the midst of the world at the present day, the greatest wonder the 'world has ever witnessed from the beginning of time.' "

Various Religious Denominations sprung from the Reformation.

Lutherans, Calvinists, Presbyterians, with their various divisions; Independents, or Congregationalists, Baptists, Unitarians, Quakers, or the Society of Friends, Moravians, Irvingites, Swedenborgians or New Jerusalemites, Latter Day Saints or Mormons, Methodists, with their various branches, together with the following minor sects who have, all of them, registered places in England and Wales alone, without taking any account of various other sects that have sprung up, in Scotland and America, taken from Whitaker's Almanac of 1883, as furnished to the compiler by the Registrar-General.

N.B.—*Those marked * appeared in the list for the first time in the year referred to.*

Advent Christians
Adventists, The
*Alethians (formerly known as Rational Christians)
~~Anglican Church~~
Apostolics
Armenian New Society
*Army of the King's Own
Baptists
Baptized Believers
Believers in Christ
Believers in the Divine Visitation of Joanna Southcote, Prophetess of Exeter
Believers meeting in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ
Benevolent Methodists
Bible Christians
Bible Defence Association
Brethren
Calvinistic Baptists
*Calvinistic Independents
Calvinists and Welsh Calvinists
Catholic Apostolic Church
Christadelphians
*Christian Army
Christian Believers
Christian Brethren
Christian Disciples
Christian Eliasites
*Christian Evangelists
Christian Israelites
Christian Mission

*Christian Pioneers
Christian Teetotallers
Christian Temperance Men
Christian Unionists
Christians owning no name but the Lord Jesus
Christians who object to be otherwise designated
Church of Christ
~~Church of England~~
Church of Progress
Church of Scotland
Church of the People
Congregational Baptists
Congregational Temperance Free Church
Countess of Huntingdon's Connexion
Covenanters
Coventry Mission Band
Danish Lutherans
Dependents
Disciples in Christ
Disciples of Jesus Christ
Eastern Orthodox Greek Church
Eclectics
Episcopalian Dissenters
Evangelical Free Church
Evangelical Mission
Evangelical Unionists
Followers of the Lord Jesus Christ
Free Catholic Christian Church
Free Christian Association
Free Christians
Free Church
Free Church (Episcopal)
Free Church of England
Free Evangelical Christians
Free Grace Gospel Christians
Free Gospel and Christian Brethren
Free Gospel Church
Free Gospellers
Free Methodists
Free Union Church
General Baptist
General Baptist New Connexion
German Evangelical Community
German Lutherans
German Roman Catholics
German Wesleyans
Glassites
Glory Band
*Gospel Temperance Blue Ribbon Army
~~Greek Catholic~~
Halifax Psychological Society
Hallelujah Band
*Holiness Army
Hope Mission
*Hosanna Army
Humanitarians
Independent Church of England
Independent Methodists
Independent Religious Reformers
Independent Unionists
Independents
Inghamites
Israelites
~~Jews~~
Latter Day Saints
Lutherans
Methodist Reform Union
Missionaries
Modern Methodists
Moravians
Mormons
Newcastle Sailors' Society
New Church
New Connexion General Baptists
New Connexion Wesleyans
New Hebrew Congregation
New Jerusalem Church
New Methodist
Old Baptists
Open Baptists
Open Brethren
~~Orthodox Eastern Church~~
Particular Baptists
Peculiar People
Plymouth Brethren
Polish Society
Portsmouth Mission
Presbyterian Baptists
Presbyterian Church in England
Presbyterian Church of England
Primitive Congregation
Primitive Free Church
Primitive Methodists
Progressionists
Protestant Members of the Church of England
Protestant Trinitarians
Protestant Union
Protestants adhering to Articles 1 to 18, but rejecting Ritual
Providence
Quakers
Ranters
Rational Christians
Recreative Religionists
*Redeemed Army
Reformed Church of England
Reformed Episcopal Church
Reformed Presbyterians
Reformed Presbyterians or Covenanters
Reformers
Reform Free Church Wesleyan Methodists
Refuge Methodists
Revivalists
Revival Band ~ Roman Catholic Church
*Royal Gospel Army
Salem Society
Salvation Army
*Salvation Navy
Sandemanians
Scotch Baptists
Second Advent Brethren
Secularists
Separatists (Protestant)
Seventh Day Baptists
Society of the New Church
Spiritual Church
Spiritualists
Strict Baptists
Swedenborgians

Temperance Methodists
Testimony Congregational Church
Theistic Church
Trinitarians
Union Baptists
Union Churchmen
Union Congregationalists
Union Free Church
Unionists
Unitarian Baptists
Unitarian Christians
Unitarians
United Brethren or Moravians
United Christian Army
United Christian Church
United Free Methodist Church
United Presbyterians
Universal Christians
Unsectarian
Welsh Calvinistic Methodists
Welsh Free Presbyterians
Welsh Wesleyan Methodists
Wesleyan-Methodist Association
Wesleyan Reformers
Wesleyan Reform Glory Band
Wesleyans
Working Man's Evangelistic Mission Chapels
Worshippers of God
Young Men's Christian Association

N.B.—From the preceding statement it is seen that the entire number of sects having places registered for Divine Worship, on the 30th September, 1882, was 186, the entire number of registered places of worship being 21,864.—WHITAKER.

TWENTY-NINTH DISCOURSE

ON

THE APOSTLES' CREED;

AND

SECOND ON NINTH ARTICLE.

"*I believe in the Holy Catholic Church, and the Communion of Saints.*"

INTRODUCTION.

We resume the Ninth Article of the Creed announced in these words, in order to treat of it more at length. We have seen that our Divine Saviour having instituted a new Religion, instituted likewise a Society, or, as we call it, a Church for upholding and propagating that Religion; that this Church was to last to the end of time, and be always visible in the world; that it was to be visible by the four marks of—Unity, Catholicity, Holiness, and Apostolicity. We saw how these marks are conspicuous in the Catholic Church in union with the Apostolic See of Rome, and how they are wanting in all other Societies claiming to be the Church of Christ, or to belong to it. We accordingly concluded that the Catholic Church in communion with Rome is the only true Church, and that, consequently, as there was no safety outside the Ark from

the waters of the deluge, so also there is no salvation from eternal perdition except in that one true Church.

We proceed further to consider the organisation of the Church, together with the powers with which it is invested by its Divine Founder.

Need I ask your attention to a subject of such deep interest and great importance? and that we may be the better enlightened in treating of it, let us lift up our hearts on high, and beg the assistance of Him who, in founding His Church, promised He would be with her ministers in the preaching of His doctrine, at all times, till the consummation of ages.

Body of the Subject.

1. We are, therefore, to treat of the organisation of the Church. In the organisation of any society we are to consider the various offices appointed for upholding that society, and attaining the ends and purposes for which it was instituted; and whilst we expect to find an office in which the supreme authority is vested, we also expect to find a gradation of offices deriving their respective powers from the office highest in authority above them. And in considering these various offices we are to distinguish between the offices themselves and the office-bearers who hold them. The offices remain and continue on, but the office-bearers pass away to leave room for successors, who receive, and in their turn transmit the office to those coming after them. We find this order of things in the constitution of the Church of Christ. He Himself is, as St. Paul says, writing to the Colossians, the Head of the Body, the Church, that in all things He may hold the Primacy, that is, the office of supreme authority. But as He was to be no longer visible amongst mankind after His ascension, He appointed a Vicar or Vicegerent in the person of St. Peter, making him the Rock, on which the Church was to be built, intrusting to him in a special manner the keys of the kingdom of Heaven, and commissioning him to feed not only His lambs but His sheep likewise; that is, giving him authority over His whole flock, to rule even those who were to be pastors themselves, sharing in an inferior degree His supreme authority. It was with this design, that, led by the special guidance of Providence, Peter fixed his See at Rome, that that City, then the Mistress of the World, would exercise, as St. Leo expresses it, "a more extended

sway by her Divine religion than by her earthly domination." "For," continues the Saint, "although aggrandized by numerous victories, thou hast extended far and wide, by land and sea, thy power of Empire, nevertheless all that thy warlike toil hath subjected to thee, falls short of what the peace of Christianity hath placed beneath thy sceptre." (*Serm.* 1, *S. Leonis Papæ*).

2. The development of government must go forward only as the society to be governed multiplies and extends. Hence, as the Christian Church progresses with a rapidity exhibiting so manifestly the Divine power aiding her propagation, more especially as we take account of the dreadful persecutions, by which the combined powers of earth and hell sought to overthrow her, her organisation advanced with equal steps, till we find her government regularly organised and displaying itself in full operation, as the persecutions ceased, in the early part of the fourth century. The Pope was at the head of all, with pre-eminence not only of honour but of jurisdiction over the entire Church, both pastors and people, and this by Divine right as successor to St. Peter and Vicar of Christ, the Supreme and Invisible Head. Under him were the Bishops, in different ranks. Some were Patriarchs, having very extended jurisdiction; others were Primates, with jurisdiction over a nation, country, or kingdom; others were Metropolitans or Archbishops, ruling over provinces comprising various dioceses. Under the Bishops were Parish Priests, with assistants called Vicars or Curates, and then the faithful at large. Such was the form of the government of the Church when established and organised; and such is the form she preserves under God's Providence to the present day, notwithstanding all the revolutions this world has undergone, and all the tempests she had to pass through in coming down to us.

3. In these gradations of authority in the Church of God we must distinguish between the powers of Orders and those of Jurisdiction. The powers of Orders came immediately from God, in virtue of the grace conferred by the Sacrament of Holy Orders; but these powers, or, at least, some of them, remain confined to the soul of the person ordained, till he is placed by superior authority in a post where he is to exercise them, in virtue of the rights of jurisdiction attached to that post. For example, a Bishop is a Bishop by his consecration, but he cannot

exercise the rights of jurisdiction without being, moreover, appointed by the Pope, to rule over a diocese, or some portion of the Church. In the same way a Priest is a Priest by his ordination, and receives the power of forgiving sins in the tribunal of penance, but he cannot exercise that power till he is authorized to do so by a Bishop. In this way we distinguish between the powers of Orders and of Jurisdiction—a distinction which shows that the Protestants, and the various parties into which they are divided, have lost all governing rights, even though they retained (which they have not) the powers of Orders.

4. Having now before us the organised form of the Church, we proceed to another subject most interesting to dwell upon—the power with which she is invested. This power is of a double character, relating first to her teaching, which is called her doctrinal power, and secondly to her governing power. We must consider each separately; and first her doctrinal power. It is expressed in the clearest and most ample terms by our Divine Lord. **Quote** (*Matt.* xxviii. 19); (*Ephes.* v. 25, 26, 27); (1 *Tim.* iii. 15); (*Matt.* xvi. 18), *without going into controversy upon them*, **and proceed.** From these declarations, so distinct and decisive, we see at once that our Divine Lord conferred upon His Church the gift of infallibility, that she could teach nothing contrary to the doctrine He confided to her to be taught.

Now this infallibility regards, in the first place, revealed truths.

Explain and conclude, the Church, in virtue of her infallibility, can never teach as revealed any doctrines that are not revealed, or even remotely opposed to the revealed Word of God.

In the second place, the Church is infallible in directing the morals, or moral conduct of her children.

Explain and conclude, that the Church cannot guide the faithful in any line of morality different from that marked out by the precepts, maxims, and counsels of revelation.

Thirdly. The Church is infallible in her discipline. **(Explain and conclude as before).**

Fourthly. The Church is infallible in approving Religious Orders. **(Explain as before).**

Fifthly. In the canonization of Saints. **(Explain).**

Sixthly. She is infallible in detecting error, and this not only

when the error is plainly expressed in any book or composition, but when it is mixed up with the other matters of such book or composition. In this case the Church acts like a chemist, who, analyzing some poisoned compound, extracts the poison from the other matter. Just in the same way the Church analyzes a book or composition containing the poison of erroneous doctrine or morals, and extracting the poison, sets it forth in distinct form, and so condemns it.

5. This gift of infallibility the Church exercises in various ways.

First. The Church exercises her infallibility through the Pope; or, more properly, the Pope himself being endowed with the gift of infallibility, exercises that gift in the Pontifical Constitutions he may be pleased to put forth, from time to time, in his quality of Head of the Church. (**Quote** the decree of the Council of the Vatican, defining the Pope's infallibility, **and say** this descended upon the Pope as successor of St. Peter, in virtue of our Divine Lord's words, "*Thou art Peter*," *&c.* (*Matt.* xvi. 18).

Secondly. The Church assembles her Bishops, from time to time, in General Councils at the call of the Pope, as in the Council of Trent, or quite recently in the Council of the Vatican, at Rome. In these august assemblies the Church exercises her infallibility, and cannot err.

Thirdly. In her dispersed capacity or form. (**Explain**). We see the Church dispersed all over the world, with the bishops and priests teaching and preaching as well by books as from the pulpit. In this preaching and teaching, the Church exercises her infallibility, and cannot go astray.

6. Having thus seen, in a rapid glance, the power of the Church, in her office of teaching, we have a few words to add on her power of governing her children.

Explain that the Church being a complete society, or kingdom in herself, must have power over her subjects for their government. Hence, first, her power of making laws; secondly, of punishing the violation of them by various penalties, even so far as to cast out of her bosom rebellious children, who would rise up against her teaching or laws, or the authority of her pastors. Hence heretics who rebel against her teaching, and schismatics who rebel against her laws, and the authority of her pastors, are both cut off from the Church.

Explain that this power of government resides, in the first place,

in the Pope as universal Ruler of the Church; secondly, in the Bishops in their various assemblies, such as General, National, Provincial, and Diocesan Councils. Moreover, outside these assemblies, they have personally a ruling authority, which they are authorized to exercise over their subjects, by mandates or orders which declare their will in authoritative forms.

Conclusion.

Conclude by observing: We have cast our eyes over the Church; we have seen her organisation, her teaching and ruling powers, and are we not to conclude she is worthy the wisdom of her Divine Founder, and the Providence He continues to exercise over her? She has been in the world for over eighteen hundred years. During that time what changes, disturbances, and revolutions have occurred over the face of the globe! What storms and triumphs has not the Church herself undergone! Nevertheless she continues her course throughout the succession of ages, always displaying the power that upholds her, and verifying the Divine promise, "*Behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world.*" (*Matt.* xxviii. 20).

Consult Theology, also Bishop Hay on "The Church."

N.B.—Enliven the subject as you go along, with expressions of admiration, gratitude, gladness, especially at the close of the several parts.

THIRTIETH DISCOURSE

ON

THE APOSTLES' CREED;

AND

THIRD ON NINTH ARTICLE.

"*I believe in the Holy Catholic Church, and the Communion of Saints.*"

Introduction.

We considered in our last discourse the organised form given to the Church by her Divine Founder, taking account of the various offices comprised in that organisation, and distinguishing between the offices themselves, as they remain permanent, and the office-bearers, who pass away to give place to their successors. We further considered the powers or prerogatives,

with which the Church is invested for the purpose of teaching and governing her subjects, pointing out how these prerogatives are exercised. In taking notice of these prerogatives, we further adverted to the distinction to be kept constantly in view between Orders and Jurisdiction in the various offices of the Church, and the persons occupying them; and we drew our observations to a close by reflecting how this organisation fixed and durable has outlasted the revolution of ages, coming down to us in all its completeness and vigour, so as to display beyond the possibility of doubt the Divine wisdom with which it was originally planned, and the Divine power by which it is constantly upheld, in fulfilment of our Saviour's most gracious promise, "*Behold, I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world.*" (*Matt.* xxviii. 20).

This view of the organisation of the Church has brought before us, at the same time, a glance of her constitution, and in particular of the supreme power by which she is ruled. This power, however, claims a fuller consideration at our hands, as it is from the head, according to St. Paul, "*the whole body, being compacted and fitly joined together, by what every joint supplieth, according to the operation in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body, unto the edifying of itself in charity.*" (*Eph.* iv. 16). What a right has not such a subject to our most serious attention! The members depend on their head, and we as members of the Church, with what reverence and fond regard should we not look up to our head, who is charged with our guidance through this vale of tears to our heavenly destination. Let us, therefore, lift up our hearts on high, and beg of Him who enlighteneth every man that cometh into this world, to enlighten us, and guide our minds in the consideration of a subject, in which His supreme counsels and our eternal welfare are alike engaged, and let us beg of Mary, that, as a loving mother, she will obtain for us the assistance of the Divine Spirit in our reflections on so important a subject.

Body of the Subject.

1. In withdrawing His visible presence from amongst mankind, our Divine Lord constituted St. Peter as His Vicar for the supreme government of His Church, giving him the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, and charging him with the care of His whole flock, sheep and lambs, that is, pastors and people.

After spending seven years at Antioch as Bishop of that See, St. Peter came to Rome. Whether he did so by a special command of our Divine Lord, or by a particular inspiration, is not a matter of vital importance, as it is enough to know that the change, an event pregnant with the greatest issues the world has ever witnessed, could not have taken place but by the express order of that All-ruling Providence, "*which reacheth from end to end mightily, and ordereth all things sweetly.*" (*Wisd.* viii. 1). Let us therefore adore the counsels of the Most High in the translation of Christ's Vicar from the comparatively obscure city of the East to the great Metropolis, which exercised its sway over the western and eastern world alike.

2. Our Divine Lord had come into this world to overthrow the almost universal empire Satan had acquired over mankind, and to establish His heavenly kingdom in its stead. This great achievement, begun by Himself, was to be continued by St. Peter and St. Peter's successors to the end of time, and where should the war be carried on rather than in Rome, the great stronghold, whence the prince of darkness exercised his dominion, at the time, far and wide, over the pagan world? What a war! Never were hostile forces so unequal, so unmatched. Let us review them for a moment. On one side, weakness, on the other, the power that had conquered the nations of the earth: here poverty to the last degree of destitution, there unbounded resources of every kind; here folly that appeared the most absurd, the folly of the Cross, there the wisdom and knowledge and experience of the most advanced cultivation and the most profound philosophy. Yet the war went on. For five-and-twenty years Peter resisted, and in the end "resisted unto blood." As he falls, a successor is in his place, and as the successor in his turn becomes a victim, his place is at once occupied by another, till Pope after Pope, thirty of them perished in the cause of their Master, in the three first centuries of the Church's existence. But whilst they perish, their followers still fight on the "good fight," literally exhibiting the spectacle described by St. Paul, "*Quenching the violence,*" *&c.* (Quote *Heb.* xi. 34, 35, 36, 37, 38). Nevertheless the war continues on, and from the capital it extends to the provinces, putting into execution, as far as earth and hell could carry it out, the persistent design of utterly extirpating Christianity from the earth. But the great Founder was looking on from on high,

and if He allowed the powers of this world to combine with the powers of darkness against His Church, and the war to continue so long, it was to prove to all ages to come, that "*the gates of hell were not to prevail against her*," and that she was to endure till the consummation of ages. At length the hour of victory has struck, and the moment has arrived when the world is to see that "*there is no wisdom, no prudence, no counsel against the Lord*" (*Prov.* xxi. 30); and the Cross, "*stumbling-block*" as it was "*to the Jews*," and "*foolishness*" as it appeared "*to the Gentiles*," was to display both to Jews and Gentiles "*the power of God, and the wisdom of God.*" (1 *Cor.* i. 23. 24). The fact, the dazzling fact will live for ever in history. (Here relate the apparition of the Cross in the heavens with the words, "In this sign wilt thou conquer," and continue). The struggle is now over, the victory is won, and Rome, the capital of the pagan world, is the centre of Christianity, "ruling," as St. Leo says, "more extensively by her divine religion, than ever she did by her earthly domination." (*2nd Nocturn, 29 June, Breviary*).

3. Christ's Vicar is now in peaceful possession of Rome, as the Metropolis of the Christian commonwealth, and Rome assumes the title of the Eternal City, because that commonwealth is to endure "*even to the consummation of the world.*" (*Matt.* xxviii. 20).

4. We are, therefore, to consider the prerogative of the great Monarch of Christendom, as we view him peacefully seated on the Chair of Peter, reigning and ruling over the universal flock of Christ,

They are in the first place of a spiritual kind; they are also temporal, and of this world,

In the spiritual order his greatest prerogative, and that which comprises all the rest, consists in his being Christ's Vicar, or Vicegerent on earth, as successor of St. Peter, whom our Divine Lord Himself elevated to this sublime position.

Quote *Matt.* xvi. 18, "*Thou art Peter*," *&c.*, also "*Simon, Son of John*," *&c.* (*John* xxi. 15), and assert, that by the commission contained in these words our Divine Lord conferred upon St. Peter a primacy or supremacy not only of honour and dignity, but also of authority and jurisdiction, over the other Apostles, and that St. Peter having fixed his See in Rome, and having died there, it follows that his successors in the See of Rome, that is the Popes, as they succeed

one another, inherit from him his primacy or supremacy of jurisdiction, over the entire Church of Christ, including Bishops and Priests, as well as the simple faithful. So has it been for the eighteen hundred years that are elapsed, and so will it be to the end of the world, and therefore the Church, besides being One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic, also has the designation and title "Roman."

5. As a consequence of his primacy of jurisdiction over the entire Church, the Pope is authorized to reserve to himself all causes affecting the government or well-being of the Church from every part of the Christian world.

He holds pre-eminence of authority respecting General Councils, to convoke them, to preside over them either personally, or by legates appointed by him for the purpose, and to confirm their acts and proceedings.

Moreover, and independently of General Councils, he is himself infallible in virtue of his position; and his pontifical constitutions addressed officially to the Church, carry with them equal infallibility as the emanations of General Councils themselves. (Quote *Decree of Vatican Council.*)

6. As to his power of government and administration, he has authority, in the first place, to make laws binding on all the members of the Church, as he can also constitute Bishops, and erect, transfer, extend, diminish or absolutely extinguish Episcopal Sees throughout the world.

In the second place, his judicial authority is equally extensive, and he can therefore call to his supreme tribunal all ecclesiastical causes, and receive appeals from all other tribunals, and adjudicate on them.

Such is the spiritual sway committed by our Divine Lord to the Supreme Pontiff or Pope, in the person of St. Peter, as His own Vicar or Vicegerent, over the Church, which "*He hath purchased with His own blood.*" (*Acts* xx. 28).

7. We come now to consider, for a moment, the authority of the Pope in temporal matters. And entering on this branch of our subject, we will premise an observation, which no one will dispute, namely, that the Almighty can declare His will as distinctly by facts as by words. Now, He has declared His will in the most significant and unequivocal way, as to the temporal Sovereignty of the Pope. In the history of the world, in the records of kingdoms and empires, what institution have we presented to us so wonderful, in whatever aspect we view it,

as the temporal kingdom of the Popes? Its origin, its increase and development, its duration, its Popes to the number of 261 in unbroken succession, its trials, vicissitudes and victories, and the influence it exercised over human affairs, in so many periods of its history: all these circumstances put together present the temporal Sovereignty of the Vicar of Christ as an institution unique and exceptional amongst all the institutions on the face of the globe since this world began. Therefore, resuming our principle, that God makes known His adorable will, as well by facts as by express declarations, there can be no doubt but that the temporal dominion held by the Popes through so lengthened a succession of ages was willed and appointed by a special will and a special appointment of that all governing Providence, "*that reacheth from end to end mightily, and ordereth all things sweetly.*" (*Wisd.* viii. 1).

Besides the argument of fact, we can also reason from the inherent principles involved in the spiritual supremacy itself of the Vicar of Christ. That there is to be a Pope, as long as Christianity will last, that is, to the end of time, is a legitimate position to assume with those whom our controversy concerns. Now, the existence of a Pope involves the necessity of an extensive establishment, with a great variety of departments and offices to carry on the government of the universal Church. We come, therefore, to consider a most important question. It is, what mode of existence is to be provided for such an establishment? Manifestly it must be independent of all secular control; and how on earth secure this independence except by allowing him a certain portion of this earth's surface to rule over, as any other temporal sovereign rules over his dominions, independently, and free from all external control? So forcible is this argument, that not only theologians, but distinguished statesmen and politicians, have been led to pronounce most emphatically in favour of the Pope's temporal Sovereignty (see "Tractatus de Ecclesia, auct^e. Vincent," page 565, to which add the declaration (*ibid.*) of Pius IX., 20th April, 1849, &c., with the conclusion of the author, as in Appendix).

Conclusion.

Having thus seen the reasons, nay the necessity, of temporal dominion in the hands of the Pope, what are we to say of the

present unhappy position of matters in Rome? We are believers in Providence, we are children of hope, we lift our thoughts on high, and we hear the words proceed from the throne of God, "*Why have the Gentiles raged?*" *&c.* (*Ps.* ii. 1, 2, 3, 4). Yes, God is biding His time. Man's infirmity is His opportunity. Great difficulties have ever been the occasions for His signal interposition in the cause of His Church. History is open to us, and its pages record worse times than we at present witness, and we see the glorious results that ensued. Besides the thirty Popes martyred during the persecutions of the first three centuries of the Church's existence, thirty Popes have since been compelled to go into exile, four were imprisoned, four were unable to occupy the Eternal City, and seven reigned in banishment at Avignon, in the South of France.

We therefore cling to the assurance that, however gloomy the present hour may be, the day is not distant when He who "*holds the hearts of all men in His hands* (according to His own words), *will make kings understand, and receive instruction, and embrace discipline, lest the Lord be angry, and you perish, when His wrath shall be kindled in a short time, and they will be proved blessed that trust in Him.*" (*Ps.* ii. 10, &c). In the meantime, God will see to the necessities of His Church, abiding with her all days, even to the consummation of the world, &c., &c.

APPENDIX TO THE DISCOURSE ON THE ROMAN PONTIFF.

Declarations of Eminent Men, at different times, respecting the Temporal Sovereignty of the Pope.

Bossuet.—In his discourse on the unity of the Church, and his defence of the declaration of 1682:—"We know that the Roman Pontiffs, and the Sacerdotal order, hold by the concession of Princes, and possess most legitimately, temporal goods, rights, and positions of authority to rule over others in the same way as other men. We know that these possessions, inasmuch as they are consecrated to God, ought to be held sacred, and no one can invade them, plunder them, and give them over to seculars without committing sacrilege. The Sovereignty of the City of Rome and other possessions have been granted to the Apostolic See, in order that it might exercise

its authority with the greater liberty over the entire universe. We congratulate not only the Apostolic See on this account, but the universal Church ; and we desire, with all the ardour of our best wishes, that this Sovereignty continue safe and sound in all manner of ways."—*Gosselin, Pouvoir du Pape, lib.* 1, *sec.* 1, *cap.* 16.

These words of the great Bishop of Meaux were quoted by the excellent Abbé Emery in presence of Napoleon I., as he was planning the overthrow of the temporal authority of the Holy See.

NAPOLEON I.—He is reported by M. Thiers, as stated by Cretineau Jolly (*l'Eglise Romaine en face de la Révolution*), to have said:—"The Institution, which maintains the unity of the Faith, that is to say the Pope, guardian of Catholic unity, is an admirable Institution. People complain that he is a foreign Sovereign. This head is, indeed, a foreigner, and we have to thank heaven on that account. The Pope is away from Paris, and it is well that he is so. He is not at Madrid nor at Vienna, and therefore, is it that we uphold his spiritual authority. Were he at Madrid, or at Vienna, there would be reason for speaking otherwise. Do people believe that, were he in Paris, the people of Vienna or Madrid would consent to accept his decisions? We should, therefore, be very happy that he resides away from amongst us, and that in residing away from amongst us he does not reside amongst those who could be our rivals, that he inhabits that old city of Rome, far out of the reach of the Emperors of Germany, out of that of the Kings of France, or the Kings of Spain, holding the balance between the Catholic Sovereigns, inclining always a little towards the strongest, but soon standing erect, if the strongest become an oppressor. This was brought about by ages, and the result is excellent. For the government of souls it is the best, the most beneficent Institution, that can be imagined. I do not support these things by the obstinacy of a devotee, but by the force of conviction."

In the years 1848 and 1849, when Pope Pius IX. was in exile, there were numerous declarations of eminent men respecting the necessity of his temporal Sovereignty. Amongst them M. THURIOT DE LA ROSIERE spoke as follows in the Legislative Assembly:—"It is necessary that the Pope be a Sovereign, because if the human soul, if the temporal power, could suspect his independence, if he had not the evidence, the high reputation of independence, souls and temporal powers, so naturally inclined to resistance, would resist his decrees. It is necessary, in fine, that he be a Sovereign, because were he not a Sovereign, he should be subjected, and he should submit to all the vicissitudes, diplomatic and military, of a State of which he would not have the government. It was necessary, moreover, that he should be a Sovereign, because, just as the human soul has need of the organs of *sense* in order to act, the spiritual power should have a free atmosphere, with agents free to execute its will."—*Ami de la Religion*, tr. 153, p. 203.

NAPOLEON III. wrote as follows to the Apostolic Nuncio in 1848:—"The temporal Sovereignty of the venerable Head of the Catholic Church is intimately bound up with the splendour of Catholicism, as it is with the liberty and independence of Italy."

M. BARTHE, later on, the 6th March, 1862, amidst the applause of the French Senate, exclaimed—"Yes, for the good of Catholics, the Chief of Catholicity should be a Sovereign completely free. I desire complete liberty of conscience, but I desire also complete freedom for the Chief of Catholicity. I am opposed to his liberty being, I will not say attacked, but even suspected, and for that he requires the fullest independence. Let me be allowed to quote on this subject what Frederick the Great said to Voltaire:—'The question is how to overthrow the temporal power, because the temporal power once overthrown, the spiritual power will be what it can be, and, we will come by that means to have national churches, as we have national languages.'"

At the same period, very many others, eminent for their talent and learning, spoke and wrote to the same effect, and amongst them, Bishops Dupanloup, Gerbet, Parisis, Pie, Plantier; as also the following distinguished laymen—MM. de Falloux, Nettement, Poujoulat, Thiers, Villemain.

Also, about the same time, there were several Councils held in France, at Tours, Rheims, Rouen, Toulouse, Albi, Bourges, that adopted as an oracle of their sentiments the words of Bossuet—"We pray with all our best wishes that the sacred Princedom remain by all means safe and sound;" and the Fourth Council of Bordeaux going still farther, in 1859, adopted most cordially the words of Pius IX., in his Encyclical of the 18th June, which will be recited in the sequel.

Pius IX., in his Allocution, delivered in the Consistory, held 20th April, 1849, spoke as follows:—"We cannot refrain from advising and reproving in particular those who applaud the decree, by which the Roman Pontiff is despoiled of all this honour and dignity of his civil power, and assert that the said decree conduces very much to procure the liberty and happiness of the Church itself. Here, however, we openly and publicly declare, that we do not speak from any ambition of ruling, or any desire of temporal sovereignty, our disposition and inclination being averse to all kind of authority over others. But the duty of our position requires of us, that in defending the civil princedom of the Apostolical See we maintain with all our strength the rights and possessions of the Holy Roman Church and the liberty of the said See, which is bound up with the liberty and interests of the entire Church. And, indeed, the men who, in applauding the above-mentioned decree, assert such false and absurd things are either ignorant, or pretend to be ignorant, that by a most special arrangement of Divine Providence the Roman Empire having been broken

up into a variety of kingdoms and states, the Roman Pontiff, to whom the government and care of the whole Church was confided by Christ our Lord, should possess a temporal Sovereignty for the precise purpose, that, in governing the whole Church, and maintaining her unity, he should enjoy that complete liberty, which is necessary for the fulfilment of the office of the supreme Apostolic Ministry. For it is manifest to every one, that the faithful nations and kingdoms would not afford full confidence or dutiful respect to the Roman Pontiff were they to regard him as subject to any ruler or government, and not free, since the faithful, and other kingdoms could not help suspecting very much, and fearing that the Pontiff would conform his acts to the will of the Ruler or Government of the territory where he would abide, and therefore, under this pretext, would often resist his acts. And, indeed, let the very enemies themselves of the temporal Sovereignty of the Apostolic See, who now are masters of Rome, say with what confidence and respect they would accept the exhortations, admonitions, commands, and constitutions, of the Supreme Pontiff, in case they knew him to be subject to the control of any Ruler or Government, especially were he under any Ruler between whom and the Roman Power war for any length of time might be going on."

Again in his Encyclical of the 18th of June, 1859, Pius IX. says:—"We openly declare a temporal Sovereignty to be necessary for this See, that it may exercise its sacred authority without any obstruction for the good of religion."

The Bishops assembled in Rome, adopting the declarations of Pius IX., addressed him under date 8th June, 1862, in the following terms:—"We are all to hold as most certain, that this temporal kingdom became annexed to the Holy See not by chance, but was granted to it by a special Divine dispensation, and that it was strengthened and preserved almost miraculously through a lengthened series of years, and with the unanimous consent of all kingdoms and governments: and therefore do we declare with loud and solemn statement, that you have desired constantly to preserve and maintain entire and inviolate the civil Princedom of the Roman Church, and its possessions and rights as belonging to the universal Catholic world: and, moreover, that the safe keeping of this Princedom of the Holy See, and the Patrimony of the Blessed Peter, is the concern of all Catholics, and that you are ready to lay down your life rather than abandon in any manner this cause of the Church of God and of justice, to which noble words we reply with acclamation and applause, '*that we are ready to go with you, both to prison and to death.*'" (*Luke* xxii. 33).

THIRTY-FIRST DISCOURSE
ON
THE APOSTLES' CREED;
AND
FOURTH ON THE NINTH ARTICLE.

"*I believe in the Holy Catholic Church, and the Communion of Saints.*"

Introduction.

Having in the three preceding discourses disposed of the first part of this Article of the Apostles' Creed, we are to treat this evening of the second part, viz.—"*The Communion of Saints.*" These are words of large and important significancy. They point to interests in which we are all deeply concerned, interests of a spiritual order, and therefore so much the more precious to us than any interests of a temporal character, as the soul is more precious than the body, as heaven is above the earth, and as eternity outlasts our time in this world, and is to endure for ever and ever.

[Invite attention, and invoke a blessing.]

Body of the Subject.

1. The Communion of Saints! What do these words mean? To understand them we must canvass each word apart. And first, the word "*Saints.*" Who are they? They are all the members of the Church of God. The term "*Saints*" applies even to sinners within the Church, because they were sanctified in baptism, and they are bound to a life of sanctity, on which account, St. Paul, writing to the faithful of his day, gives them the title indiscriminately (*Rom.* i. 7; 1 *Cor.* i. 2); and St. Peter gives them the same title (1 *Ep.* ii. 9, 10); "*You are a chosen generation,*" *&c., &c.*

But when we say the term "*Saints*" means all the members of the Church of God, we understand the Church in its most comprehensive sense, including first the Church Triumphant, or the blessed spirits and saints in heaven; secondly, the Church Suffering, consisting of the holy souls in purgatory; and thirdly, the Church Militant, consisting of the faithful here on earth.

(Explain the terms, *Triumphant*, *Militant*, and *Suffering*, and why they are so applied).

Thus understanding who are comprised in the term "*Saints*," we can understand the other word "*Communion*." It means that all the blessed spirits and saints in heaven, and all the holy souls in purgatory, and all the faithful here on earth, hold communion, that is, are united with each other in interests and advantages of a spiritual order, which are common to them all.

We can illustrate this to a certain degree by an example. There is a certain quantity of land belonging to a town. Belonging to the town, it belongs to each inhabitant of the town, and all share, one way or other, in the profits arising from this common land. In the same way, let us suppose a fund of money belonging to a population. It belongs to all the individuals of that population, and each has an interest in the fund. So it is with regard to the "*Communion of Saints*." The Church in heaven, in purgatory, and on earth, possesses benefits and advantages of a spiritual kind. These form a common stock for all the members belonging to the three branches of the Church. Each has an interest in them, and all share in them in one way or other.

The human body will also help us to understand our subject; "*For as the body*," as St. Paul observes (1 *Cor.* xii. 12), "*is one, and hath many members: and all the members of the body, whereas they are many, yet are one body, so also is Christ*," that is, the mystic body of Christ, or in other words the Church; and then going on to show how the several members of the body have a common and mutual interest in each other, the Apostle says, "*And if one member suffer anything, all the members suffer with it; or if one member glory, all the members rejoice with it*" (*Ibid.* 26), and then applying the figure, he concludes by saying, "*Now you are the body of Christ, and members of member*." What a beautiful idea! All the blessed spirits and saints in heaven, all the holy souls in purgatory, and all the faithful on earth forming one body, the mystic body of Christ, and sharing in each other's interests and advantages, as the members of the human body are in sympathy with each other, to suffer, or to benefit all together.

The Article of the Communion of Saints may be further illustrated by the doctrine of association and co-operation.

When a number of individuals, for instance, a society, co-operate with each other towards a common end or purpose, their interests as well as their liabilities become identified and common with respect to that end and purpose, so that the liabilities and interests of *each* are the interests and liabilities of *all;* and the liabilities and interests of *all* are the liabilities and interests of *each*. So it is with the Church of God. All its members are associated in one great alliance or company, and co-operate towards one universal end or purpose, which, in its ultimate aim, is to honour and glorify God, and each has his merit in this great work, not according to his individual part in it, but according to the *entire* work as done by *all* the members combined, so that the merit of the entire Church is the merit of each of the members composing it, and God receiving the honour and glory resulting from such association and co-operation grants His gifts and graces to the Church, for the full and entire benefit of *each* member of the Church as for *all* combined. This is the idea St. Paul would give us of the mystery of our redemption, in teaching us that our Divine Saviour died for each of us *individually*, as for us all *universally*. Thus he says of himself, as if separating himself from the rest of mankind, "*Christ loved* ME, *and delivered Himself up for* ME." How happy, therefore, is the lot of a Christian, having in the communion of the saints a right of ownership and enjoyment in respect of the spiritual treasure of the Church of God.

2. But we have to inquire what is this spiritual treasure—this common stock of interests and advantages belonging to the Church in its three divisions, in heaven, purgatory, and on earth. We will begin with the blessed spirits and saints in heaven. Having triumphed over their temptations and the enemies of their salvation, they do not forget their brethren, who are, some of them, fighting their battles here, and others suffering in purgatory.

Refer to 2 *Mach.* xv. 11, 12, 13, 14, and say: similar is the charitable solicitude of the blessed spirits and saints in heaven for their brethren elsewhere. Refer also to *Apoc.* viii. 4, and one or two other texts in the references at the end of the Bible, under the title "*Saints*," and conclude by saying how valuable the services, the blessed inhabitants in heaven render us, and the souls in purgatory by their intercessions before the throne of grace and mercy.

And whilst the blessed spirits and saints in heaven are so

charitably interested for us here below, we are far from being indifferent in their regard. We join them in thanking, praising, and glorifying God for His mercies to them; we exult with them in their triumphs and glory; we venerate them with religious homage, and have recourse to their prayers, as also we look up to them as models and examples to follow. For these various purposes we celebrate feasts and erect churches in their honour; we put institutions, parishes, cities, and countries under their patronage, and we rejoice to bear their names. Thus it is, as St. Paul expresses it, we come to Mount Sion. (*Heb.* xii. 22, 23, 24). O! how holy this communion we on earth hold with the saints in heaven. (See "*Challoner's Meditations*," *Nov.* 1).

And from looking up to heaven, let us for a moment look down to purgatory. The holy souls who are there suffering for a time are our brethren in Christ. We feel for them in the charity of Christ as our brethren; we consider their sufferings, the intensity and duration of these sufferings, from which they cannot be released until they will have paid the last farthing; we consider that, in the midst of these sufferings, they can do nothing themselves either to mitigate their rigour or shorten their duration; and in their dire distress, they call out to us, saying night and day, "*Have pity on me, have pity on me, at least you my friends, for the hand of the Lord hath touched me.*" (*Job* xix. 21). Moved, therefore, with compassion for these dear suffering souls, we do all we can to release them; we pray for them; we apply indulgences for them, and, above all, we offer for them the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. (See *Guillet La Jour de Morts*, also *Challoner's Meditations on all Souls*).

And in return what do these holy souls do for us? They can do themselves no service, but it is piously believed they can pray, and do pray for us. At all events, when released from purgatory by our endeavours, they will not forget their benefactors. They will remember us before the throne of God, and when it comes to our turn to leave this world, O! what petitions will they not offer to have us admitted into heaven at once, recollecting it was by our means the gates of heaven were so soon opened to them. O! how heart-moving this interchange of charitable offices, this "*Communion of Saints*" with the suffering souls in purgatory.

3. It remains only to consider the "*Communion of Saints*" as between ourselves here on earth. O what a thought! we are

all fellow-members in Jesus Christ, and the charity of Jesus Christ animates us towards each other. Our Divine Saviour taught us how to pray, saying, "*Thus therefore shall you pray: Our Father, &c., &c. Give us this day our daily bread.*" Thus in this Divine prayer, on which all our other prayers are modelled, we are not allowed to address heaven for ourselves without including all our brethren in the Church. The same condition goes with our fasts, our alms, and other good works, so that as no member of the human body works for itself alone, without communicating the benefit with the other members, in the same way, &c., &c. (Quote 1 *Cor.* xii. 20, 21, 22-25).

Speak on the religious communities throughout the Church, and, alluding to Sodom, which would have been spared were even ten just men within its walls, say what calamities are averted from towns, cities, and countries by the prayers and good works of holy communities.

But it is specially in our public worship, and other public acts of devotion, that we make common cause with each other in heaven's blessings. If, according to His own most gracious promises, where two or three are assembled in His name, our Blessed Lord is in the midst of them, what must be the efficacy of our public acts of devotion, when, in our hundreds and our thousands, we offer up our prayers, alms, and fasts, and other good works for each other? But, above all and before all, we have a common property in the Adorable Sacrifice of the Altar, that Sacrifice which is the same as that of the Cross, that Sacrifice of adoration, thanksgiving, propitiation, and impetration, that Sacrifice which offers more glory to God, and pleads more powerfully for man, than all the homages of angels and saints in heaven continued to all eternity. O! here indeed is our treasure, accessible to us all, in which we can enrich ourselves with the abundant and superabundant merits of the Great Mediator of God and man, Christ Jesus.

4. I shall only say a word on the treasury of the Church and the common property we have in it. What is this treasury? To understand it, we are to consider that our Divine Redeemer did and suffered more for us, a thousand times more, than was necessary for our redemption. These superabundant merits exist always, and are confided to the Church. Also the Blessed Virgin Mary and many of the saints did more than was necessary for their salvation. Their superabundant merits unite with

those of our Blessed Redeemer, and are likewise confided to the Church. Here, then, is an immense accumulation of merits at the disposal of the Church, which she dispenses to the faithful in the way of indulgences, to enable us to pay the debts we owe to the justice of God. We have a common property in this treasury, holding communion with each other in its riches and benefits.

[Some words of sentiment.]

Conclusion.

We have now some idea of the "*Communion of Saints*," O! what a happiness to belong to a Church possessing such rich treasures for her children, &c., &c. Let us, therefore, with St. Paul, "*draw near with a true heart in fulness of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with clean water. Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, and let us consider one another, to provoke unto charity and good works; not forsaking our assembly, but comforting one another, and so much the more as you see the day approaching* (*Heb.* x. 22, *&c.*); *until we all meet into the unity of faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the age of the fulness of Christ*" (*Eph.* iv. 13, 14), the Head of that body, of which we are member of member, with our suffering brethren in purgatory, and our triumphant brethren in glory. Amen.

Consult Guillet's "Projets d'Instructions," Inst. xxxiii.; Catechism of the Council of Trent, on the article: Passage from Time to Eternity, ch. xxi.; Butler's "Lives of the Saints," 1st and 2nd Nov.

THIRTY-SECOND DISCOURSE
ON
THE APOSTLES' CREED;
AND
FIFTH ON THE NINTH ARTICLE.

"*I believe in the Holy Catholic Church, and the Communion of Saints.*"

Introduction.

We have already devoted four discourses to the Ninth Article of the Creed. We have reviewed it in both its branches and under various aspects. We have considered especially that our Divine Lord did not establish several Churches, but only one Church, which, as St. Paul says, "*He hath purchased with His own blood*" (*Acts* xx. 28); that this one Church is the Catholic Church in communion with the Apostolic See of Rome; and that, as there is but one only Name, His own adorable Name, in which we can be saved, so it is only in this one Church, and as members of it, that this Name of salvation is to save us. We have, moreover, bestowed some reflections upon the supreme Head, who, as successor to St. Peter, and Vicar of Jesus Christ, rules from Rome, over this world-wide Institution. However, before taking leave of an Article of our holy faith, with which our eternal destiny is so specially bound up, it should appear just and natural to consider the happiness we possess in being members of the true Church of Christ, and heirs to the great and manifold blessings we enjoy by a privilege so special and precious; and we shall consider this happiness in order to thank God, and be ever grateful to His Divine Majesty, for having in His singular mercy, conferred upon us so priceless a happiness.

Thanksgiving is a homage ever pleasing to God. It is an unceasing homage of the angels and saints in heaven. The Holy Scriptures, Old and New, are full of canticles and acts of thanksgiving. Our Divine Saviour Himself, when on earth, frequently gave expression to His thanksgiving to His Eternal Father; and in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, one of the chief ends of that adorable mystery is to thank God for His mercies and blessings. Therefore is it that in the Preface of the Mass

the Priest says aloud, "Let us give thanks to the Lord our God," "Gratias agamus Domino Deo nostro," and the people answer, "It is meet and just," "Dignum et justum est:" after which the Priest proceeds to say, "Vere dignum et justum est, æquum et salutare:" "It is, indeed, meet and just, right and salutary for us, at all times and everywhere, to give Thee thanks, Holy Lord, Omnipotent Father, Eternal God, through Christ our Lord." Therefore, thanksgiving has been an essential duty of religion, at all times, and everywhere, amongst the saints of God, whose sentiments are so well expressed by St. Augustine in these words:—"Can our mind think of anything," says this great saint, "our mouth speak of anything, or our pen write of anything better than 'thanks be to God!' Nothing shorter can be expressed, nothing more joyful heard, nothing more sublime conceived, nothing more useful done." (*Ep.* 77).

Let us, therefore, in God's name, dwell for a few moments on the inestimable happiness we possess in belonging to the true Church, that the thought of this happiness, always present to our minds, may be to us a constant incentive to thank "the Giver of all good gifts," to whom we are indebted for it. Let us, therefore, beforehand, lift up our hearts on high, to beg of God to aid our infirmity, giving to our reflections the help of His Divine grace, and rendering them thereby fruitful in the fruits of thanksgiving; and let us implore of her, whose soul magnified the Lord, and whose spirit hath rejoiced in God her Saviour, that she will obtain for us the grace, likewise, of thanking God and praising Him for His mercies and goodness in having chosen us, before the foundation of the world, to be in time members of that Church out of whose pale there is no salvation.

Body of the Subject.

1. We are to thank God, and be ever grateful to Him for the blessing of belonging to the true Church, because the saints of God regarded this privilege as the greatest happiness here on earth. So great did they esteem it, that it never came into their minds to compare it with all the advantages and treasures of this world, except, indeed, to despise them in the contrast. Let us listen for a moment to St. Paul, as he dwells upon this comparison. (Quote *Phil.* iii. 7, 8, adding): and how,

and where, did he gain Christ? In his conversion to the Church of Christ, and in being an apostle of that Church, of which we, at this distance of time, have the blessing of being members.

We read of a very interesting account of a great Chancellor of Poland, who, in dying, wished to leave to his posterity a record of his gratitude to God for the blessing of dying in the Catholic Church. He made the matter the subject of a special article in his will, in which, among other things, he said, "It were much better not to have been born, my dear son, than to live out of the bosom of the Church."

And St. Teresa, that great and holy soul, after having done so much for the glory of God, and so much for the salvation and perfection of her own soul, as also the souls of so many others—when dying, her last words were, "Well, after all, I die a child of the Church." O! how truth and sincerity come with death. Then it is, that the secrets of hearts are revealed; and were we at the point of death this moment, what would we say of crowns, thrones, sceptres, kingdoms, and empires? Should we not with the Apostle regard them as "dung" in comparison with the glory awaiting us as members of God's Church? &c.

2. But how have we become members of God's true Church?

Here narrate the fact of Philip baptising the eunuch (*Acts* viii.), or of Peter receiving Cornelius into the Church (*Acts* x.), and observe what a special grace, what a special act of mercy on the part of God, and how they never ceased thanking His divine goodness for having called them by a call so special out of darkness unto His marvellous light, and united them with "*a chosen generation, a kingly priesthood, a purchased people.*"

But how did we become members of God's true Church? Was it by ourselves? How vain such a boast! Let us only ask ourselves the question, why were we not born in the midst of paganism and idolatry, amongst generations "seated in darkness and the shadows of death?" or in the midst of heresy or schism, where we should know the true Church only to be, like St. Paul before his conversion, blasphemers of it? Surely, it did not depend upon us, in any degree, not to have come into this world in a position so miserable, so calamitous, so deplorable. Was it not God, therefore, that pre-ordained the happy circumstance of our birth, that we should be born of Catholic parents,

and in the bosom of the Catholic Church? It is in view of this great mercy of God, even before we were born, that St. Paul calls upon us to "*give thanks to God the Father, who hath made us worthy to be partakers of the lot of the saints in light; who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of the Son of His love,*" (*Colos.* i. 12, 13), that is, the Church, which that beloved Son of the Father purchased with His own blood.

[Words of thanksgiving.]

3. But this blessing of being born in the bosom of the true Church is not only an inestimable blessing in itself, but a blessing also of predilection and preference. Jacob and Esau were children of the same parent, they were, moreover, twins, born at the same birth; yet God said of the twin brothers—"*Jacob I have loved, and Esau I have hated;*" that is I have preferred Jacob to Esau; and the Apostle commenting upon this conduct of the Almighty, asks the question, "*Is there injustice with God?*" that is, was it unjust, on the part of God, to have preferred one brother to the other, even from their birth, nay, before they were born; and he answers the question at once, by peremptorily saying, "*God forbid,*" and quotes the words the Lord Himself addressed to Moses—"*I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will show mercy to whom I will show mercy.*" But, then, says the Apostle, "*You will say to me: Why doth He then find fault? for who resisteth His will?*" In other words, why blame the brother to whom he shows disfavour — how can *he* help it — and how can *he* go against the will of God? The Apostle answers with a reproach, and asks—"*O man, who art thou that replicst against God? Shall the thing formed say to Him that formed it: Why hast thou made me thus?*" &c. (*Rom.* ix. 20). **Quote still on from** *Rom.* ix. 21, 22, 23, **and go on to say**). Now, all this applies to us in the preference by which God has chosen us to be born in the bosom of the true Church, in place of millions and millions, who, even to-day, are living, and will die, outside her pale. What had we done to merit this preference, and what had they done to be disregarded? Absolutely nothing: for neither they nor we were yet born when God had decreed and determined the distinction between us. And will it be said, God was unjust to them? With the Apostle let us say, "*God forbid:*" and sad though their destiny is in this

world, and still sadder in the world to come, they will be bound to say for all eternity with holy Tobias, "*Thou art just, O Lord, and all Thy judgments are just.*" (*Tob.* iii. 2). And as for us, "*domestics of God and fellow-citizens*" as we are, "*of the saints*," in the one true Church of Christ, "*built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner-stone, in Whom all the building groweth up into an holy temple in the Lord* (*Ephes.* ii. 19, 20, 21), what can we say, except to acknowledge in all sincerity, humility, and gratitude with the Apostle, that "*God hath delivered us and called us by His holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the times of the world.*" (2 *Tim.* i. 9). O yes! behold the mystery of God's mercy, of God's predilection, in our regard. He Himself called us, not according to any works or merits of our own, because we had none, but according to the purpose of His own good will, and the grace of His Divine Son our Saviour; and He called us, not only from our mother's womb, but "*before the times of the world*," before there was a sun in the firmament, before moon or stars showed their light, before the foundations of the world were laid. He called us from the midst of not only a perverse and depraved generation, from the midst not only of infidel and idolatrous populations, seated in darkness and the shadow of death, at a distance, but from the midst of heretics and schismatics, here at home and all round; reserving us for the happy lot of being born of Catholic parents, and in the bosom of the Catholic Church. O what thanksgiving should we not render unceasingly to the Most High for such a privilege! for such a destiny reserved for us in preference to millions upon millions of our fellow-creatures, and all this without any merit on our part! O that every breath proceeding from our lips, that every throb of our heart within us, would be so many acts of thanksgiving, increasing in fervour and intensity for time and eternity!

4. But does it occur to any of us to say, that perhaps God, looking forward into the future, foresaw that *we* would make better use of His favours and graces in being members of the true Church, than those poor souls He has left, and leaves, to live and die in the darkness of ignorance and error? Did we presume to say so, the truth of God's Word would protest against so arrogant a pretension. The Jews, in their day, were

the true Church of God. He was *their* God, and they were *His* people—His people of predilection out of all the nations of the earth; and what did our Saviour say of them? Oh! He complained that if the graces given to them were given to Tyre and Sidon, heathen and infidel cities though they were, "*they would do penance in sack-cloth and ashes.*" O what a mystery! God gives His graces to those who will abuse them, and withholds them from those who would make good use of them. And we—we, members though we are of God's true Church, why should we boast? Where is the room for our boasting, as if God foresaw *we* would make better use of His graces than our fellow-creatures would do, if *they* were called instead of us to the true Church? Alas! is there not room, on the contrary, for the reproach, that if Tyre and Sidon, if heathens and infidels, had the graces that are lavished upon us, they would be converted and be better Christians than we? O the Catholic that is not living up to the obligations of his religion! O the Catholic who contradicts, by a wicked and depraved life, the holy vocation in which he has been called to serve his Maker: O let him hear his condemnation from the lips of our Divine Lord Himself—"*It shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrha in the day of judgment, than for him.*" (*Matt.* x. 15). *Sodom and Gomorrha*—O what names! Yet the inhabitants of these cities, whose abominations cried out to heaven for vengeance, will have a less terrible condemnation awaiting them on the last day, because, if *they* had received graces, which we are favoured with in the true Church, they would have done penance in sackcloth and ashes; and instead of being consumed with fire and brimstone from heaven, would perhaps, as our Saviour said, have remained even to this day. O we have reason to rejoice, indeed, in being members of the true Church; but we have reason also to tremble, if we do not live up to our obligations within her pale, and, therefore, the Apostle warns us "*to work out our salvation in fear and trembling.*" (*Phil.* ii. 12).

5. But the privilege of being members of the true Church, is a blessing comprising in itself blessings upon blessings, and blessings of the most precious kind. In a word, what do we need for our souls and for our salvation, that we have not provided for us? How often have we been pardoned our sins? Seven times? Ay, seventy times seven; and the fountain is still open to us to be washed yet more from our iniquities, to be

cleansed yet more from our sins. Have we not the other Sacraments, all conveying to our souls, as channels from an inexhaustible reservoir, the merits of our Saviour's Passion and Death? Have we not, above all, the mystery of mysteries, the mystery of the Adorable Eucharist, in which our ever Blessed Redeemer presents Himself in sacrifice for us every day, "*from the rising of the sun to the going down thereof*" (*Mal.* i. 11), and gives Himself to us as the food and nourishment of our souls in this life, and an assured pledge of the glory of the life to come? Have we not the Communion of Saints, whereby we are united with the angels and saints in heaven, as well as with our brethren throughout the world here upon earth, in a common interchange and enjoyment of all the mercies, blessings, and favours, that descend from the Almighty Giver of all good gifts upon His Church Triumphant in heaven, His Church Militant hereupon earth, and His Church Suffering in purgatory? O what reason has not our Blessed Saviour to say to us:—"*What is there that I ought to do more to my vineyard, that I have not done to it?*" (*Isai.* v. 4). Yes, sinner or saint, I appeal to you to lift up your eyes, and hands, and hearts to heaven, and let me ask you, what more could you desire of God in the way of your salvation, than you possess in the privilege of belonging to the true Church?

[Renewed sentiments of gratitude, admiration, &c.]

6. To these general considerations, which every Catholic has a right to indulge in, I will permit myself to add a special one, grounded upon our particular nationality, as members of the Catholic Church in Ireland. Yes, it is a happiness, an inestimable happiness, to be born in the bosom of the Catholic Church: but, let me say it, this happiness is still more special in our having been born of Catholic parents, on the soil of Catholic Ireland.

Our Divine Lord, on the night before His Passion, addressed Himself to Peter, telling him that He prayed a special prayer for *him*, that his faith should not fail, and that, being once converted, he would confirm his brethren. In the same spirit did our glorious Apostle St. Patrick pray for his Irish children in the faith. He prayed for them a hundred times by day, and a hundred times by night; he prayed for every blessing and grace in their behalf, but he prayed especially that their

faith should never fail. His prayer was heard, and here we are to-day witnesses of its fulfilment. Of its fulfilment, do I say? Let me add, of its fulfilment against all the powers of earth and hell combined to frustrate it. Yes, we can stand before the world, and proclaim in the face of nations, that no country has suffered so long and so cruelly for the faith, and has kept it so well; and a thousand times blessed be God, there is not a people on the earth's surface, at this moment, displaying, in the face of heaven, a more practical observance of Christian obligation than the people of Ireland. But this is not all. Ireland is not only Ireland at home, she is Ireland abroad also. Yes, as in times of old, so at the present day, is she fulfilling an apostolic destiny for the other nations of the globe. Her Bishops are everywhere; her Priests are everywhere; her Monks are everywhere; her Nuns are everywhere, and her people are everywhere; and everywhere they retain their nationality; everywhere Ireland is stamped on their hearts, so that, like the Jews of old, on the rivers of Babylon, they are ever ready to cry out: "*If I forget thee*," O Ireland, "*let my right hand be forgotten. Let my tongue cleave to my jaws, if I do not remember thee, if I make not*" Ireland "*the beginning of my joy.*" (*Psalm* cxxxvi. 5, 6).

Conclusion.

We are, then, members of the Catholic Church. Let us thank God. We are members of the Catholic Church without any merit on our part, and through the pure mercy of God. Let us thank God still more. We are members of the Catholic Church by a special mercy, and in preference to millions yet "*seated in darkness and the shadows of death.*" What bounds shall we set to our gratitude for such a preference? And these poor souls, had they been called as we have been, would, many at least, serve God with greater fidelity and fervour. What reason for fear and trembling, lest we have a more terrible judgment before us. We have, as members of the true Church, all the advantages we could wish for in the way of salvation, and we are thrice blessed in being born in that land of faith so specially favoured from on High. O let us say "*Deo Gratias*" from the bottom of our hearts, and in all the sincerity of our souls; and let us continue in this sentiment during life, in the hope of being associated hereafter with the angels and saints in eternal thanksgiving in the kingdom of heaven.—*Amen.*

THIRTY-THIRD DISCOURSE
ON
THE APOSTLES' CREED;
THE TENTH ARTICLE.

"*I believe in the forgiveness of Sins.*"

Introduction.

These words announce to us the Tenth Article of the Apostles' Creed. They are, indeed, consoling words, and convey great tidings of joy to us all. For, as the Apostle St. Paul says, "*all have sinned and do need the glory of God,*" (*Rom.* iii. 23); and St. John, in still stronger terms, tells us, "*If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us*" (1 *John* i. 8); and again, "*if we say that we have not sinned, we make God a liar, and His word is not in us.*" (*Ibid.* 10). How welcome, therefore, is the message which this Article of the Apostles' Creed brings—a message of peace and pardon—a message declaring to us the forgiveness of our sins in terms so distinct and formal, that, as we are Christians, we are bound to believe that our ever gracious Lord and Master has left in His Church the power of forgiving sins, and has bound Himself to maintain that power as one of the special prerogatives with which He has invested her for our sanctification and salvation. "*He is faithful and just,*" says St. John, "*to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all iniquity.*" (1 *Ep.* i. 9).

[Invite your audience to thank and bless God for such a message. Invite their attention and invoke a blessing.]

Body of the Subject.

1. Sin being of two kinds, Original and Actual, it was pleasing to our Divine Lord to institute a two-fold remedy for it: for the former, that of Baptism, and for the latter, that of Penance, both of which are distinct Sacraments of our holy religion.

A few words to explain—(1) the necessity of Baptism, (2) its efficacy in remitting not only original sin, but also actual sins com-

mitted before it was received, (3) the remission of the temporal punishment generally remaining due to sin, after its guilt and eternal punishment are forgiven in the Sacrament of Penance, as you will explain later on.

2. As human frailty is so great, God has been pleased in His infinite mercy to leave a further means of acquiring pardon besides Baptism, when, after having received that Sacrament, we have the misfortune to offend Him. Our Blessed Lord first promised this great boon to St. Peter, saying to him (*Matt.* xvi. 19). He afterwards extended the same promise to the other Apostles (*Matt.* xviii. 18). And He fulfilled this promise to them all, when, after having risen from the dead, He said (*John* xx. 22, 23). (**Quote the several passages**).

3. No sin, however great, is excepted, and no number of sins, though beyond counting, is beyond the efficacy of this power. The terms are universal, without exception or limit.

4. This power was committed to the Apostles in the first instance, but committed to them to abide in the Church, passing from them to their successors in the ministry, *i.e.*, the Bishops and Priests of the Church, till the end of time. This is the nature of all institutions. Certain powers are granted to those who are first appointed to begin the institutions, and these powers then pass on to their successors. Hence the Bishops and Priests of the present day have the same power as if our Divine Lord were to address each of them, as He did the Apostles in the commencement, saying, "*Receive ye the Holy Ghost*," *&c.*

5. How great a grace the remission of sin is! Such a power existed not in the Old Law. Abraham had it not, Moses had it not, &c. The only authority the Priests of the Old Law had was to declare sin to be forgiven on certain conditions; even the Prophets could do no more. **Refer** to Nathan, not himself forgiving the sin of David, but only telling him "*the Lord hath taken away thy sin*" (2 *Kings* xii. 13). **Refer** to *Luke* v. 20, 21, *seq.* to observe the words of our Saviour, saying "*thy sins are forgiven thee.*" This appeared blasphemy to the Pharisees, who say (**quote**), and their outcry was silenced only by a miracle, which our Divine Lord performed on the spot. (**Quote His words and relate the miracle**).

Observe, that if we ourselves had never heard of so extraordinary a power, we should, like the Pharisees, disbelieve it until assured of

it by a miracle, or on the authority of God's Word. Go on to observe, that the power to forgive sins has no comparison in any earthly power. The greatest power we are acquainted with, amidst the powers of nature, reaches only to the body; hence our Divine Lord, *Matt.* x. 8 (quote); but the power of remitting sins reaches the inmost spirit of man.

There is a portion of mankind who, different from us, are black in colour, and therefore called Negroes. Let us make a supposition, that God gave the power to any man to change the colour of this Negro population, and make them white like other men. all would cry out in the words of Isaias, "*Who hath ever heard of such a thing? Who hath seen the like?*" (*Isai.* lxvi. 8). Yet, what would this be in comparison? &c.

Apply, by describing the state of a soul as a penitent enters the confessional, and the state as he comes out. Enlarge, by saying, that so great is the power of remission of sin, that St. Augustine, and, with him, all divines hold the remission of sin to be a greater work than the creation of the world: proving this by the fact, that to create the world cost the Almighty only a word; "*He said, and all things were made; He commanded, and all things were created,*" (*Ps.* xxxii. 9), whereas the remission of sin cost Him His Blood and Life. quote the words of St. Augustine—"*It is a greater work to make a sinner just* (that is, to free him from a state of sin) *than to create heaven and earth.*" (*Tract.* 52 in Joan).

6. This power is exercised in the confessional, that is, the tribunal of penance, and it was for the exercise of it that Penance was instituted one of the Seven Sacraments of the New Law. This Sacrament is "*the open fountain,*" foretold by the Prophet, "*for the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for the washing of the sinner.*" (Quote also *Ezec.* xxxvi. 25).

7. Exhort to frequent this fountain of grace. Refer to the Probatica (*John* v. 2); and make it the ground of an appeal *a fortiori* for going to confession, when one has the misfortune to fall into mortal sin.

8. Observe, that this Sacrament, whilst it remits mortal sin as to the guilt and eternal punishment, usually leaves still a temporal punishment to be satisfied for by our own penitential endeavours and Indulgences, otherwise it is to be undergone by suffering in Purgatory.

Conclusion.

Recapitulate the several points, adding that the greater the mercy of God in the Sacrament of Penance, the more dreadful will be our punishment and condemnation, unless we use this mercy, &c.

N.B.—Blend pious sentiments with the several points, chiefly at the end of each; such as thanks, blessings, wonder, &c.

Consult "Catechism of the Council of Trent" on the subject; Guillet's "Projets d'Instructions," Inst. xxxiii; also the Penance Treatise.

THIRTY-FOURTH DISCOURSE
ON
THE APOSTLES' CREED;
AND
FIRST ON THE ELEVENTH ARTICLE.

On Death.

"*It is appointed unto man once to die.*"—Heb. ix. 27.

Introduction.

In reciting the Apostles' Creed, we pass on from "*the forgiveness of sins*" to the "*resurrection of the body,*" without any mention of death. This great event, however, is comprised in the "*resurrection of the body,*" for, as St. Paul teaches, to rise in incorruption, the body must be first sown in corruption; to rise in glory, it must be first sown in dishonour; to rise in power, it must be first sown in weakness; and to rise a spiritual body, it must first be sown a natural body. (1 *Cor.* xv. 43, 44). Consequently, before we speak of the "*resurrection of the body,*" it will be according to the natural order of things that we should speak of death, which, separating the soul from the body, consigns the body to the earth, from which it is again to rise in the general resurrection. I therefore purpose speaking to you this evening, in God's name, on the momentous subject of death. Momentous, indeed, it is, and most momentous, because, though

it is the event only of an instant, upon that instant, however, depends our destiny of happiness or misery for all eternity.

[Invite attention and invoke a blessing, after which lay down the divisions of the subject.]

N.B.—This introduction is to be used when the subject is treated of in connection with the Creed, otherwise the following:—

Introduction.

All things in this world here below are in a constant state of change. They have their beginning, their progress, and their end. Man shares in the same mutability of all things around him, for as holy Job says of him, "*Man born of a woman, living for a short time, is filled with many miseries. Who cometh forth like a flower, and fleeth as a shadow, and never continueth in the same state.*" (*Job* xiv. 1, 2). But, whilst we are passing through these various phases of life, there is an event fixed and certain awaiting us all, the momentous event, which is to close our time in this world, and to launch us into an endless eternity. This is the event, of which we are warned in the text I have quoted for you—"*It is appointed,*" *&c.* This event is of supreme importance to us to meditate upon frequently during life, more especially because it is a great preservative against sin, which is the dreadful evil we have to fear at the moment of death. On this account, the Holy Ghost, speaking to us in the inspired words of Ecclesiasticus, exhorts us to have death constantly before our minds, saying: "*In all thy works,*" *&c.* (*Eccl.* vii. 40). Taking, therefore, the advice of the Divine Spirit, and with a view of resisting the temptations which are constantly leading us into sin, we shall bestow some reflections this evening on this most important subject.

[Invoke a blessing.]

Body of the Subject.

Divide it into three parts—1st, the *certainty* of death as to its occurrence; 2nd, its *uncertainty* as to the circumstances of its occurrence; 3rd, that occurring, it will, as the Apostle says, and as we all know, occur but *once*.

1. *Its certainty.*

Inculcate this in a variety of ways, *first* stating that there is a decree of God fixed and universal to that effect; *secondly*, that this decree has been executed on mankind from the beginning, is being executed at present, and will continue to be executed till the last

man shall fall a victim to it; *thirdly*, that every day, every hour, and every minute has its victims, so that, according to the present population of the world, there is a death, on an average, every second, sixty every minute, &c.; *fourthly*, that our day and hour is to come. As the sun that rises is to set in the evening, and, setting in the evening, is to rise next morning, equally certain is it, that the day will come when we shall not live to see night, or the night when we shall not live to see morning; *fifthly*, bring the consideration home to each as unavoidable, by saying, the day or night awaits everyone here, when the news will go out "HE IS DEAD." Yes, the moment is to come, when these eyes are to be closed never again to be opened, till we awake on the last day, these ears shut to every sound, till we hear the trumpet-sound saying to all mankind, "Awake ye dead and come to judgment." Go then into detail, describing the body in its stages of decomposition, quoting *Job* xvii. 14.

Apply the foregoing by lamenting the thoughtlessness of mankind in not keeping before their minds this great truth, that they are to die. Appeal to various classes of sinners, the drunkard, the libertine, &c., putting them in presence of death, and applying *Wisd.* v. 6, 7, 8, 9. Exhort to a constant remembrance of death, repeating, "In all thy works," &c.

2. *The uncertainty of death as to its circumstances, &c.*

Inculcate this by going into detail of time, place and other circumstances. Show that even in the case of illness, however long, "*we know not the day nor the hour*," quoting *Matthew* xxiv. 42, xxv. 13; *Mark* xiii. 35. Lament the folly of mankind in putting off their conversion, as if they could command the time and other circumstances of their death, showing how differently they act in their temporal concerns. Instance how a man having built a house that has cost him a large sum, will insure it against the accident of fire, saying to himself, if the house come to be burned, I shall be paid what it cost me. Observe how few houses are burned, in comparison with the number of souls that are every day consigned to the pit of hell, &c. Thus do men prove how true are the words of our Saviour: "*The children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light.*" (*Luke* xvi. 8). Quote parable, *Luke* xii. 16.

3. *Death occurs but once.*

The consequence is, that if we die a bad death, the calamity, which is the greatest of all calamities, can never be repaired "*If the tree fall*," *&c.* (*Eccles.* xi. 3).

Inculcate this by comparison with other calamities, which admit of remedy, whereas, &c. Quote parable of Dives and Lazarus, to enforce this point (*Luke* xvi. 19; *Eccles.* xi. 3). Apply this consideration, by insisting that no care or labour can be too great to avert a calamity so great and irreparable.

Conclusion.

Sum up the points with these conclusions. 1. Death certain; therefore we should keep it before our minds, to prepare for it. 2. Uncertain in all its circumstances; therefore we should be ready always and under all circumstances. 3. Death but once, and if a bad death the calamity is irreparable; therefore we should omit no endeavours to secure a happy death. A few words of exhortation in accordance with these conclusions, ending with our Lord's words. (*Matt.* xxiv. 44).

Pious Anecdote.

Relate the particulars of the happy death of St. Galla, as told by Pope Gregory the Great, *2nd Nocturn of her office*, which is to be found 5th October in the supplement.

After losing her husband at an early age, she remained a widow, and gave herself to God as a nun, in a convent adjoining St. Peter's at Rome, where she edified the community by her piety and the practice of all kinds of good works, especially charity to the poor. It pleased God to afflict her with a cancer on the breast, which gave her an occasion of practising patience, and conformity to God's holy will, and thereby earning great merit. In her illness, she kept two candles burning at night in her cell, and it happened on a particular night, as she was suffering more than usual, that St. Peter appeared to her, standing between the two lights. She was not frightened, but, as the Pope mentions, taking courage on account of the benignant looks of the Apostle, she accosted him, saying with a heavenly smile, "Well, my Lord, are my sins forgiven me?" The Apostle immediately replied with a gracious nod, "Yes, they are forgiven, come along with me." At that moment, Galla thought of another holy nun in the convent, for whom she had great affection, and said to the Apostle, "May I beg, O Lord, that sister Benedicta will come with me?" "No," replied St. Peter, "but such a sister (naming her) may come, and Benedicta will be sent for in thirty days' time," whereupon the vision disappeared. Immediately Galla called the reverend mother of the convent, and told her the whole fact, and in three days she died, and with her the other sister; sister Benedicta following them in thirty days, according to the words of the Apostle. The Pope adds, that the tradition of this extraordinary

fact was as fresh in the convent in his day, as if it had been witnessed by the nuns living at the time, so great was the interest with which the memory of it was preserved amongst them.

THIRTY-FIFTH DISCOURSE

ON

THE APOSTLES' CREED;

AND

SECOND ON THE ELEVENTH ARTICLE.

Death of the Sinner.

"*The death of the wicked is very evil.*"—Ps. xxxiii. 22.

Recapitulate preceding subject on death, setting forth, 1st, that death is certain; therefore it is certain that we should prepare for it: 2ndly, that it is uncertain as to time, place, and other circumstances; therefore we should be prepared for it at all times, in all places, and under all circumstances; and 3rdly, that death occurs but once, and it is impossible to repair the calamity of a bad death; therefore we should do all that is in our power to secure a good and avert a bad death. Whence **proceed to say**, that these considerations apply to death in a general view of the subject, but that there are special considerations applicable to a bad death of a more thrilling importance, which furnish matter for a particular discourse.

[Here announce the subject, invite attention, adding a short invocation.]

Body of the Subject.

1. **Show** the death of the sinner to be very evil from the declarations of God Himself; **quote text**, and enlarge on it; **quote** *Jeremias* vii. 13, xxxv. 17; *Prov.* i. 24, to show how God complains that He frequently calls upon the sinner to be converted during life, but the sinner is deaf to His warnings, on which account He in His turn will be deaf to the voice of the sinner, when he calls for mercy. **Quote** for this *Gal.* vi. 7, 8; *Prov.* i. 28; *Isai.* lxv. 12, and lxvi. 4. **Add**, that whilst thus abandoned by God the dying sinner is held in bond-

age by the devil, who now more than ever endeavours by every effort to accomplish his eternal ruin. Quote *Apoc.* xii. 12; Council of Trent, *Sess.* 14, c. ix. "*Nullum tamen tempus est*," *&c.* Infer how dreadful the situation of the dying sinner, "*encompassed with the sorrows of death, and overtaken by the perils of hell.*" (*Ps.* cxiv. 3).

2. "*The death of the wicked is very evil*," because they are liable as well as others, nay more than others, to be carried off by a sudden death. How many sudden deaths do we hear and read of! Many a sinner goes to bed in perfect health, and is a cold corpse before morning. How many go out in all the vigour of robust manhood, in the morning, and are struck down, in one or other of the thousand ways in which death smites her victims, before evening! Here go through a detail of the various accidents that may cause a sudden death (See *Imit.* B. 1. chap. xxiii. 1). Who amongst us has not had narrow escapes from a sudden death, some of which we noticed, and many of which we have never known, but which were no less real and imminent? &c. Ask, what is the death of a sinner called suddenly out of life in any of these ways? It is described by holy Job: "*In a moment they go down to hell.*" (xxi. 13). And our Divine Lord, speaking of Satan, in order to inspire His disciples with a holy fear, says: "*I saw Satan like lightning falling from heaven.*" (*Luke* x. 18). Such is the death of the sinner when his soul is suddenly separated from his body. Like lightning it is cast into hell. This moment he may be seated at the festive board, next moment in a region of fire, where he cannot have a drop of water to cool his burning thirst. Amplify by a series of contrasts occurring all in a moment; after which apply the point by asking, who is the sinner? Is he a notorious malefactor? a public scandal-giver in the face of the parish? Go into detail, and reply "No," adding, when you say a sinner, you mean a person guilty of even one mortal sin, in act, word, or inward thought, &c.

Apply, to excite fear and trembling at the idea of remaining a single day in the state of mortal sin.

3. *How the sinner dies.* Raise the point by objecting that it may be said you take an undue advantage of a sinner, by threatening him with a sudden death. May he not, and does he not, get notice like others of his approaching end by some previous illness? Exclaim—Alas! what a delusion, &c.

Admit that he may get time, but deny that he will make proper use of it; he may get warning by sickness beforehand, but he will not take this warning. What is the experience of the world? Is it not, that as men live so do they die? Why? Because, among other reasons, to die a good death the sinner must be sincerely converted to God. And is this the case ordinarily? The proof should be an amendment of life, in case he recover. Insist on this being rare, and that the general rule is that which the *Imitation of Christ* asserts, that "*few are corrected as they recover from sickness*," and therefore the pious author of that most excellent book warns us, "*that*

we can do many good works, whilst we are in health and well," but," says he, "*when we get ill, we can do very little if anything at all.*" (B. I. chap. xxiii.) Go on to say: Let us consult experience upon this matter. If we had before us a priest who had spent forty years in the ministry, attending the sick and dying all that time, we might ask him the question, how many sinners did he know, who, escaping the jaws of death by recovering from a dangerous illness, were reclaimed on their recovery. What would be his reply, think you? We may well suppose that he had attended ten such cases every year, during the forty years of his ministry, that is four hundred in all. Now, if we asked him how many of these four hundred sinners were reclaimed on their recovery, would he say fifty? No, not fifty. Well, would he say five less than fifty? No, not so many. Well, would he say forty? No, not even so many out of the four hundred. Well, let us diminish the number still more, and ask if he had known thirty, &c., &c., ending with asking, did he even recollect one single case in the whole course of his forty years' experience, one single case of a sinner being reclaimed, on recovery from a dangerous illness. Perhaps yes, a solitary case, or two, or three, or perhaps not even one at all. Alas! how true, that as men live so do they die.

But, perhaps, some one will say, that I make an exaggerated supposition. If any one would say so, I am furnished with a reply, which is put into my mouth by the declarations of saints of God, whose testimony we must accept with respect as due to their sanctity. Quote St. Jerome: "*Out of a hundred thousand who continue in sin, scarcely one will be saved.*" St. Vincent Ferrer says, "*that it is a greater miracle to save such sinners than to raise the dead to life.*" Other saints had visions, in which they saw sinners falling into hell like flakes of snow in a snow-storm. Explain by stating the death-rate of the human race to be approximately, in round numbers, more than one a second, 80 a minute, 5,000 an hour, 120,000 a day, 40,000,000 a year.

Describe the death of a sinner from the beginning of his illness to his death; showing how the thought of death is kept away till the last; that everything is done to cure the body but nothing to cure the soul; that the priest is at length sent for. Describe the sentiments of the priest, the administration of the Sacraments, whilst the sufferer is in a state of half, if not entire, insensibility; the uselessness of the obsequies, if his soul be at the time buried in hell, &c.

Conclusion.

Conclude by asking, who would not be horrified at the idea of dying such a death? and call out to the sinner, if guilty of only one mortal sin, to hurry to the tribunal of Penance, and to be reconciled with that God "*who wills not the death of the sinner, but that he be converted and live.*" (*Ezec.* xxxiii. 11).

THIRTY-SIXTH DISCOURSE
ON
THE APOSTLES' CREED;
AND
THIRD ON THE ELEVENTH ARTICLE.

A Happy Death.

"*Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His Saints.*"—Ps. cxv. 15.

Introduction.

Observe that every one desires happiness; that this desire cannot be satisfied in this life; that we must look therefore to the world to come for its satisfaction; that it is only by a holy death we can attain that happiness; and that, consequently, nothing can be of greater consequence to us than to secure for ourselves such a death. Therefore it is, that the Psalmist declares in the words of the text, "*Precious in the sight*," *&c.*

[Announce the subject, bespeak attention, and invoke a blessing.]

Body of the Subject.

A person undertaking a long and important journey, has his thoughts engaged with three considerations: 1st, the preparation he is to make; 2ndly, the journey itself; and 3rdly, his arrival at his destination. So also the Christian, having before him the great and important journey he must make sooner or later, from time to eternity, should have constantly before his mind the same three things: what preparation he is to make, &c. These therefore are to be the divisions of the subject.

1. *The Preparation.* Lay down the general principle, that men die as they live; and infer that to die a happy death our life throughout must be a preparation for it. Hence our Saviour brings so solemnly before our minds the uncertainty of death, and exhorts us to be always on the watch and ready. (Recite the passages, uniting them, as if all said at the same time). Hence the Christian desirous of a happy death has, *in the first place*, the thought of death constantly before his mind. When he hears of any one dying, or sees a funeral, he takes to himself the warning, "*Remember my judgment: for thine also shall be so: yesterday for me, and to-day for thee.*" (*Eccli.* xxxviii. 23). Relate the example of St. Francis Borgia accompanying the dead body of the Empress Isabella to

Granada (*Lives of the Saints, Oct. 10th*); or that of St. Sylvester (Nov. 26, *5th Lesson of his Office, Breviary, Sup.*) Mention other occasions, such as the beginning of a new year, the beginning of Lent, each time he goes to confession. &c., &c. Recite how many of the saints are represented with a death's head before them at their prayers and studies, how nuns of certain communities have also a death's head attached to their beads, how many pious persons provide beforehand the religious habit in which they wish their remains to be wrapped up; all this to keep before their minds the thought of death, and their obligation to prepare for it. Recite the fact of the Emperor Charles V., having a Mass of the dead celebrated for himself, whilst yet alive, in anticipation of his death, he being in a coffin, as if dead, during the time.

In the second place, a good Christian does not stop at the bare thought of death; but, having this thought before his mind, he is constantly on the watch, as our Saviour so earnestly inculcates, that is, he is on his guard against everything that would expose him to the danger of a bad death. Hence he has a constant dread of mortal sin; and if yielding to temptation at any time, he has the misfortune to fall into mortal sin, he seeks to make his peace with God immediately, by acts of perfect contrition and going to confession, as soon as he can. Here remonstrate against the recklessness of delaying confession to Easter, or Christmas, pointing out how differently people act in case of illness, which they seek to have cured without delay.

Thirdly, a Christian desirous of a happy death makes a general confession some time or another. (Give very briefly reasons for a general confession.)

Fourthly, he has the habit, if at all convenient, of frequently approaching the Sacraments of Penance and the Holy Communion. Quote the words, "*Many are called, but few chosen*" (*Matt.* xx. 16); and urge that to be amongst the few we must live and act as they do. Observe further, that in war two things are specially necessary, viz., food and medicine, and on this account nothing is more carefully looked to than the commissariat, to provide food for the soldiers, and a medical staff to attend to their wounds and other diseases. Apply the comparison, by noticing that man's life is a continual warfare, and that God has provided us with food and medicine in these two Sacraments.

Fifthly, he has his will made, whilst he is yet in health (a reason or two for doing so, and remonstrate against reserving it for the last illness).

Sixthly, he constantly prays for the grace of a happy death. Urge this practice by quoting the words, "*Man knoweth not whether he be deserving of love or hatred*" (*Eccles.* ix. 1); observing that the

greatest saints trembled as they looked forward to death, and therefore felt the obligation of praying for the grace of a happy death.

Seventhly, you may mention and recommend the devotion of "Bona Mors," or the practice of a preparation for death, on one Sunday in the month, and going to Holy Communion with that intention

Eighthly, you may also recommend praying for the dead, by the motive, that the souls released from Purgatory by our prayers exert their influence in the court of heaven, to obtain for us the grace of a happy death.

After disposing of these means of preparation, wind up by observing, it is in this way that a Christian truly desirous of a happy death endeavours to live, never losing sight of the principle that men generally die as they live, and that to die a good death, we must as a general rule, lead a good life, or our whole life should be a preparation for death.

2. *The journey itself.* This is the second matter of concern for a traveller; so likewise, when any serious sickness comes, we are to consider we are then actually upon our journey to the other world. Quote the parable of girding the loins (*Luke* xii. 35, &c.), and apply it to sickness, using the authority of St. Gregory (see *9th lesson in the office of a Confessor non-Pontiff*). Always on the watch during life, he feels he has special reason, when visited by sickness, not to be taken off his guard. He accordingly acknowledges the law, that we are not to know the day nor the hour when the Son of Man will come, as He Himself has declared, He will come at an hour when we think not, and as a thief in the night. Consequently he says to himself, "This may be my last sickness; at all events, I should prepare as if it were so. If I recover, the preparation I make now will do me no harm, on the contrary, a great deal of good; and thousands have been lost by flattering themselves, that they were to recover, when they were overtaken by death." Accordingly, he resigns himself, nay, he conforms himself to the good will of God, saying. (Here suggest various acts of resignation and conformity, adding that it was in these sentiments, St. Paul expressed himself when writing to the Corinthians, he said "*For we know*," *&c.* (2 *Cor.* v. 1-10).

He takes care to have the priest sent for in proper time. Observe here, it is now the good Christian experiences the happiness of having had the practice of frequenting the Sacraments whilst in health. Accompany the patient in the dispositions which he has in receiving the Sacraments of Penance and the Holy Viaticum, as also Extreme Unction. Depict the peace of mind in which he is after receiving these aids of religion, making himself express his sentiments.

When the priest has gone, the patient has a crucifix and a picture of the Blessed Virgin placed at the foot of his bed, or in some place convenient, so that he may unite himself with his dying Saviour, by entering into His sacred wounds; and he frequently addresses himself to Mary in the language of the Church, saying "*Holy Mary*," *&c.*, and he also frequently invokes St. Joseph, the patron of a happy death.

He has the holy water at hand, and, by sprinkling it upon himself and his bed, and making the sign of the Cross, he keeps the tempter at a distance.

If the state of his illness permit, he has some person to read pious books for him, as also appropriate prayers for the sick and dying. He has the blessed candle in readiness, that, when the last moment arrives, he may have his passage lit up for him. Instead of long prayers, he uses frequent ejaculations (suggest some, taken from the prayers for the sick); but he has especially the sweet name of Jesus, with which he couples the dear names of Mary and Joseph; and when his last struggle arrives, he has the family to kneel down, and recite the prayers for the dying, having some person by him to continue whispering into his ears the name of Jesus to the last breath. Here observe the plenary indulgence attached to the name of Jesus, as the dying person pronounces it with his lips, or, if unable to do so, if he pronounced it in his heart.

Wind up with some words, such as, "How happy, &c., such a death!"—and wishing all present such a happiness, saying: "*May we die the death of the just, and may our last end be like to theirs.*" (*Num.* xxiii. 10).

3. *The traveller arrived at his destination.* When the traveller is arrived at his destination, all is well. He has left his difficulties behind him, with his hardships and dangers, and is met by his friends, who welcome him and lavish upon him all sorts of kindnesses and caresses. A faint picture of the happiness of the Christian soul arrived at her destination. "*Death shall be for her no more, nor mourning, nor crying, nor sorrow shall be any more, for the former things are passed away.*" (*Apoc.* xxi. 4). Yes, Christian soul, thou art gone forth out of this miserable world in the name of the Father, God Almighty, &c. (continue on the prayer from the "Ordo commendationis animae," changing the imperative mood into the past indicative; and add the following prayer "Egredienti igitur animae," &c., as far as may suit, with the same changes), and add words of congratulation; after which appeal to the audience, to stir up their ambition for so glorious an end.

Conclusion.

Conclude by reminding your audience of the general rule that as men live so do they die, and that to die a good death men must lead a Christian life; that the exceptions to the con-

trary are not one in a thousand; and that as no one in his senses would risk anything he cares about, upon a single chance with a thousand chances against him, it follows as the practical consequence of all you have said, that as men value their salvation above all things, so before and above all things, they owe it to themselves to live all through life so as to have death constantly in view, as the gate to an eternity of everlasting bliss or misery, and are therefore always prepared to die.

An example of a happy death related by Pope Gregory the Great (*6th lesson, office of St. Felix* iii. 25 *or* 26 *Feb. Sup.*)

"My father had three sisters, who were all holy virgins. One of them named Tarsilla had a vision, as she herself stated, in which she saw Pope Felix, an ancestor of mine, as well as predecessor in this Holy See. As he appeared to her, he said, pointing to the abode of everlasting happiness, '*Come, for I wish to receive you into this mansion of light.*' The next night she was seized with a mortal illness, and as she was about to expire, being surrounded by a large number of friends, amongst whom my mother, says the Pope, was present, the dying virgin exclaimed with great earnestness of voice and manner, '*Retire, retire, I see my Saviour: my Saviour cometh;*' and so saying, and fixing her eyes on Him whom she saw, her holy soul was released from her body, and, all at once, a sweet odour burst forth, showing, by its exquisite fragrance, that it was the Author of all sweetness that had come for her."

May we die the death of this holy soul, and may our last end be like to her's!

THE THIRTY-SEVENTH DISCOURSE
ON
THE APOSTLES' CREED;
AND
FOURTH ON THE ELEVENTH ARTICLE.

"*I believe in the resurrection of the body.*"

Introduction.

In the preceding discourse on the momentous subject of death, we followed man out of our present state of existence, to that destiny which awaits us all after this life—a destiny which, disengaging the soul for a time from the body, opens to her the never-ending duration of eternity, and an eternity of happiness or misery; whilst it consigns the body to the tomb, there to return to its parent earth. But as the grain, which is sown in the earth, first dies and rots, and then gives birth to new seed, so these bodies of ours, after having been committed to the earth, and having rotted in the earth, are again to rise from the dead. "*This corruptible*," says the Apostle, "*must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.*" (1 *Cor.* xv. 53). O what a subject for a Christian soul to meditate upon! Let us enter upon it in a spirit of faith, and with a seriousness of thought and feeling in accordance with so solemn and awful a subject.

[Invoke a blessing.]

Body of the Subject.

1. *These bodies we now carry about with us, after having submitted to death, shall one day rise again.* This is a truth of revelation constantly taught from the beginning of the world, as well in the Old as in the New Law. **Quote** *Job* xix. 23, 24, 25, 26, 27; *Matt.* xxii. 30, 31; *John* v. 28, 29; the Gospel accounts of the Last Judgment, 1 *Cor.* xv. 36, &c., 1 *Thess.* iv. 13, &c. **Also relate** the fact of the Patriarch Eutychius, from "Lives of the Saints," by Alban Butler, 12th March, "Life of St. Gregory the Great." **Also refer** to the vision of the "dry bones" (*Ezec.* xxxvii.) as an illustration, which **recite** if you have time, if not **omit** it.

2. *The resurrection instantaneous.* The Almighty does not

require time for His works. Refer to the works of the six days, *Gen.* i., applying the words *Ps.* xxxii. 19; and say in the same way will the resurrection take place. St. Paul tells us so. (Quote 1 *Cor.* xv. 51, 52). Return for sensation on the word "Trumpet," to say, O dreadful trumpet! O terrific sound! Sound, which shall echo throughout the mansions of the blessed in heaven, which shall penetrate the bowels of the earth and the depths of the sea, and resound through the caverns of hell. "*Oh!*" says St. Jerome, "*when I think of that trumpet, I tremble from head to foot; whether at meals, or anything else, I feel as if the dreadful peal sounded in my ears,* 'ARISE YE DEAD, AND COME TO JUDGMENT:'" adding, we shall hear this dreadful peal each of us; and we must obey it, our body coming out of the earth to receive back again the soul, which shall come to it from heaven, from purgatory, or, as it may be, but God forbid! from hell, &c.

3. *Each of us will rise in the same body, and the same soul, that we now have*—this in order that, having been instruments of good or evil during life, our bodies may share with the soul in reward or punishment. Quote *Rom.* vi. 19, *Job* xix. 25, 26, 27, also the words of our Lord, *Luke* xxiv. 38, 39, and say: so likewise when we shall be arisen, we may say to each other, "*See my hands and feet, handle and see that it is I myself.*" O what a thought! that after these bodies of ours shall have been for centuries reduced to ashes, God will still keep them in view, and make them come forth the same in every limb, &c., as during our lifetime, &c.

4. *We rise from the dead in all the perfection or integrity of human nature*—that is, exempt from the defects and deformities we may have had during life, whether these defects or deformities come from accidental or natural causes. Neither will there be the weakness of childhood, or decrepitude of old age, nor the traces of sickness, nor the loss of limbs. The Almighty Power will make good all wants and deficiencies, and all will rise in the vigour and bloom of that period of life, when youth is perfected into full maturity, and the wasting of years has not yet commenced. (Quote *St. Augustine, Manual*, cxvii.) "O what glorious things are said of thee, city of God! In thee there is no old age, nor the misery of old age. In thee there is none that is lame, none that is distorted, but all meet, as St. Paul says, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the age of the fulness of Christ."

With respect to the martyrs and confessors, they will retain their scars and the marks of their wounds, but these will be like the wounds our Saviour retains on His glorious body, all radiant with splendour, bespangling, as it were, these champions of religion with the decorations of victory.

5. So far we have considered the resurrection of the dead both good and bad in common. We must now separate them, to speak of them apart. *And in the first place, with respect to the good:* Their bodies undergo a glorious change in the resurrection. (**Quote** 1 *Cor.* xv. 52, 53, 54; *Phil.* iii. 21). This glorious change does not mean that our bodies are to be changed into other bodies, but that remaining the same they shall be clothed with glorious properties. These properties are four in number, viz., Impassibility, Brightness, Agility, and Subtility. **Explain** from *Catechism of Council of Trent, Chapter* 12, *Part* 1, *Article* xi.: **and add,** when clothed with these glorious properties, we shall realize in ourselves the mysterious words of the Apostle, "*We all beholding*," *&c.* (2 *Cor.* iii. 18).

Are the bodies of the damned to share in any of these properties? Alas! no; except in so far as that they are to be immortal, that they can never die: and need I say, that this property of immortality will be to them their greatest misery? Alas! "*They shall seek death and shall not find it: and they shall desire to die, and death shall fly from them.*" (*Apoc.* ix. 6). As for the glorious property of *Brightness*, it can have no place in that darksome land, covered with the gloom of death. They may indeed be invested with a kind of lurid gleam, half black, half red, the sort of glimmering light that torments the vision of the damned, displaying to their view the hideous forms and spectres of the infernal abyss. And as to the properties of *Agility* and *Subtility*, there can be no place for these glorious properties in dungeons of fire, where "*No order, but everlasting horror abideth.*" (*Job* x. 22).

6. And now that the resurrection has taken place, another great wonder is to be accomplished, it is the gathering together of the human race, from Adam to the last of his descendants on earth. We see sometimes flights of birds, in countless numbers, in the air, winging their way to a certain destination. So shall be the flocking together of mankind to the Valley of Josaphat, to meet there the Great Judge of the living and the dead. (**Quote** 1 *Thess.* iv. 12, 13, 14, 15, 16). **Words of sensation.**

7. And now the supreme moment is come; the sign of the Son of Man appears in the firmament, and the Son of Man Himself descends in the clouds of heaven in great power and majesty, encompassed by His angels: and having taken His seat amidst the countless thousands of the children of Adam, He separates them one from another, &c. (Quote *Matt.* xxv. 32, 33). Then follows the sentence—the sentence which is to consign the wicked to everlasting misery, and the sentence which is to establish the elect in the possession of eternal happiness. And then opens the wide earth to swallow the wicked down into the infernal abyss, whilst the elect proceed in glorious triumph to occupy the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world; and then time has come to an end, and the great Conqueror of death and hell, having made His enemies His footstool, resumes His throne of glory, to reign with the Father and the Holy Ghost for ever and ever.

CONCLUSION.

And what is this great event we have been treating of? The resurrection of the dead. Does it concern us? or rather is not our eternal destiny bound up with it? Must not each of us say with Job, "*I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that on the last day,*" *&c.* But how shall we rise? To put on the properties of a glorified body, or those of a wretched body, that is, to be cast out into exterior darkness? And we too shall be carried through the air, and wafted by the ministry of God's angels to the Valley of Josaphat. And we too shall see the Son of Man with these very eyes which now behold the light of day; and we shall be separated and placed either on the right or on the left; and we shall hear the sentence which shall make us miserable inmates of hell or glorious citizens of heaven for all eternity. O what a subject of terror! O sinner! why will you not be converted? O let us all keep before our minds the terrible ordeal we have to pass through. O that we were all penetrated with the sentiment of St. Jerome: "*I tremble from head to foot, and whether I eat or drink, or whatever else I do, I think I hear that terrific sound*—AWAKE YE DEAD, AND COME TO JUDGMENT."

Consult Catechism of Council of Trent on the Eleventh Article of Creed.

[N.B.—Do not dwell on the Last Judgment, as it forms a distinct subject in the series. After each point express appropriate sentiments.]

THIRTY-EIGHTH DISCOURSE
ON
THE APOSTLES' CREED;
AND
FIRST ON THE TWELFTH ARTICLE.

"*I believe in life everlasting.*"

Introduction.

The Apostles' Creed begins from eternity, and ends in eternity, because it begins and ends with Him and in Him Who is from eternity to eternity, "*That is, That was, and is to come.*" (*Apoc.* i. 4). "*The Alpha and Omega: the beginning and the end.*" (*Apoc.* xxi. 6). We are now come to the twelfth and final Article, which is announced to us in the words I have quoted, "*life everlasting.*" How often have we pronounced these sacred words! We pronounce them several times a day, every day of our lives, but alas! they fall from our lips only too often without reflection, without considering their awful significance; whilst, nevertheless, they express the eternity of weal or woe that awaits us all, at the close of our passing sojourn here on earth. How important, therefore, is it not, that we should collect our thoughts on this great subject, meditate deeply upon it, and regulate our lives in accordance with its awful and thrilling import. I need not, therefore, bespeak your attention on a subject, which, of itself, finds its way to all hearts; and we have only to raise our thoughts on high, to implore the grace of Him, Who is for ever and ever, that we may reflect on this final Article of the Creed, so as to reap from it, for our guidance in this life, fruits worthy of life everlasting.

Proposition and Division of the Article.

The article, "*life everlasting*," branches into several subjects, each of which is of momentous importance to us poor wayfarers in this passing world. We shall undertake, with God's blessing, to divide it into five, the first of which will be the great renewal the world is to undergo, after the last day and general judgment; the second, hell; the third, heaven; the fourth, purgatory; and the fifth, eternity.

Body of the Subject.

We begin, therefore, this evening, in God's holy name, with the first of these momentous subjects: the great renewal, which is to take place after the General Judgment, according to our Saviour's words in the Apocalypse, "*Behold I make all things new.*" (*Apoc.* xxi. 5).

The scenes of the general judgment have, in a great measure, prepared us for this renewal. We have seen the mighty angel with one foot upon the sea, and the other upon the land; and we have heard him with uplifted hand swear by Him that liveth for ever and ever, that time shall be no more. We have seen the destroying angel lighting up the fire, and we have beheld the rapid spread of the devouring flames, as they went on encompassing the globe. We have heard the terrible trumpet pealing forth its summons for the dead to rise and to come to judgment; and we have witnessed the dead, great and small, standing in the presence of the throne, and the books opened. We have beheld the Son of Man, the Great Judge preceded by His cross, descending in all His majesty, and taking His seat upon the throne. We have seen the separation of the good from the bad, and we have heard the final sentence of each. We, in fine, have seen how the Judge accompanied by His elect returned to take possession for evermore of His throne, at the right hand of his Eternal Father, where, having made His enemies His footstool, He receives from every creature in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth, benediction, and honour, and glory, and power, for ever and ever.

These thrilling scenes have prepared us for the great renewal that is to ensue. This renewal, our ever Blessed Lord Himself announces in the Apocalypse, chap. xxi., "*Behold I make all things new;*" and adding to the importance of the announcement, He says to St. John: "*Write, for these words are most faithful and true—it is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end.*" And as this renewal is displayed in vision before the Apostle's eyes, he exclaims, "*I saw a new heaven and a new earth. For the first heaven and the first earth was gone, and the sea is now no more. And I John saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice from the throne, saying: Behold the tabernacle of God with men, and He will*

dwell with them. And they shall be His people: and God Himself with them shall be their God." Hundreds of years before, the great Prophet Isaias saw the same sight. He describes it in the words of God Himself. "*For behold,*" says he, "*I create new heavens, and a new earth; and the former things shall not be in remembrance, and they shall not come upon the heart.*" (*Isai.* lxv. 17).

[Words of admiration, &c.]

2. We must not allow ourselves to suppose, that in this renewal anything is to be totally destroyed, so as to be annihilated, or reduced to nothing. No, the works of God's creation remain for ever, in one form or another. Of this Solomon expressly assures us, from the teachings of God Himself, "*I have learned,*" says he, "*that all the works which God hath made, continue for ever: we cannot add anything, nor take away from those things which God hath made.*" (*Eccles.* iii. 14). Things may change their form, and enter into new combinations, but once created by God they are never to be deprived of their existence. God, no doubt, could reduce them to the state of nothing from which He drew them in creating them. He could, and to do so nothing more should be required than to withdraw that sustaining hand, by which He maintains them in existence. But this He will not do, for, having made all things for Himself, as He tells us Himself (*Prov.* xvi. 4), that is, for His own glory, this purpose always subsists, and will be to Him a motive, worthy of His Divine Majesty, to continue the works of His own hands in existence for all eternity. As I have just said, they may undergo changes and transformations of various kinds, but there is to be no other extinction, no absolute annihilation. For example, we place wood on the fire. It soon disappears, except the little residue of ashes that remains. The rest has vanished in smoke, and vapour, and we see it no more. Yet, it has not been annihilated, not even an atom of it. It still subsists, decomposed, indeed, and in other forms, but not a particle of it has gone to nothing. This is how we are to understand the words of the Apocalypse about a new heaven and a new earth; the first heaven and the first earth being gone, and the sea being "now no more." No more, indeed, the same in form and condition as before, but renewed whilst remaining substantially the same. How justly does the

Psalmist exclaim, "*O Lord, our Lord, how admirable is Thy name in the whole earth. . . . I will behold Thy heavens, the works of Thy fingers; the moon and the stars which Thou hast founded.*" (viii. 2, 4).

3. And if in the great renewal there is to be no annihilation, neither is there to be any new creation. St. John says, indeed, "*I saw a new heaven and a new earth,*" and he adds, "*For the first heaven and the first earth was gone, and the sea is now no more.*" But this new heaven is not a different heaven from that which will have existed from the creation, nor will the earth be a different earth, but both, remaining the same, will undergo a process of renewal, but there is to be no new creation. The work of creation was finished in six days, and on the seventh the Great Creator "*rested,*" as Moses tells us, "*from all His work which He hath done*" (*Gen.* ii. 2); and, therefore, Solomon asks the question: *What is it that hath been?* And he answers it by saying, "*The same thing that shall be,*" and he adds, "*Nothing under the sun is new, neither is any man able to say: Behold, this is new; for it hath already gone before in the ages that were before us.*" (*Eccles.* i. 9, 10.)

4. But then, if nothing is to be added to, or taken from, creation, in what is the renewal of the world to consist—the renewal that is to take place after the general judgment? It is to consist of a twofold operation, by which the heavens and the earth are to be purified, in the first place, and then embellished. We will first speak of the work of purification. This is to be done by fire. We know this from the express words of St. Peter, who tells us, "*The heavens and the earth which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment*" (2 *Peter* iii. 7); and again, "*the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with the burning heat;*" and long years before, the Psalmist announced the same terrific truth: "*God shall come manifestly,*" says he, "*Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence. A fire shall burn before Him, and a mighty tempest shall be round about Him.*" (*Ps.* xlix. 3). Yes, fire will be the great purifying agent, by which heaven and earth are to be purified, with a view to their renewal.

But it will be asked, in what is this purification to consist? What defilements are to be purged away? Here we must enter into some explanation. Already have we said there was

no new creation since the day that God had rested from His labour; nor shall there be. But there have been continual changes, as there will be continual changes to the end, in the works of creation. The Psalmist, speaking to the Great Creator, says: "*In the beginning, O Lord, Thou foundest the earth: and the heavens are the works of Thy hands. They shall perish; and all of them shall grow old as a garment: and as a vesture Thou shalt change them, and they shall be changed.*" (*Ps.* ci. 26, 27, 28). We ourselves are witnesses of these changes in every department of nature. We see things beginning; we see them in their progress; we see them in their decline, till they pass away entirely from before our eyes, going on to a new state of existence. Now, very many of these changes take place by a process of corruption, decomposition, or putrefaction, by which the elements of existing forms are set free, to enter into new combinations, always, however, continuing to exist in one form or another. Hence has arisen the well-known adage of the Philosophers, "*generatio unius corruptio alterius*," that is, one thing becomes corrupted, decomposed, or putrefied, and another thing comes out of it. Let us take a homely example from agricultural life. Observe the manure, or dung heap, which the farmer sets so much value upon. It is a mass of putrefaction, consisting of elements which existed already in various forms. He spreads it out on his land. It combines with the earth, and in that combination comes back to the farmer in various products such as grass, vegetables, cereal crops, fruits, &c. This is the ever-operating process of nature the Apostle describes in his Epistle to the Romans, where he says: "*For we know that every creature groaneth and travaileth in pain, even till now. And not only it, but ourselves also, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption of the sons of God, the redemption of our body.*" (*Rom.* viii. 22, 23). Thus all nature is in a constant state of parturition, giving birth to new forms of being; and since this goes on by continual decomposition, corruption, and putrefaction, it follows, as a necessary consequence, that this world is burdened with a large amount of unseemly, foul, and fetid matter, which not only infects the earth, and all things around us, but also charges the heavens, or atmosphere above us, with noisome and noxious vapours of every kind. We can, therefore, understand what a work it will be to purge away all this foul and filthy

matter, at the end of the world. Fire, as we have already said, is to be the agent for doing so, the fire which is to encompass the entire earth, and reach into the clouds or heavens above us. The fire, that is to precede the resurrection of the dead, is to be the great agent that God will employ in His purification. "*A fire,*" says Moses, speaking in God's name, "*is kindled in my wrath, and shall burn even to the lowest hell: and shall devour the earth with her increase, and shall burn the foundations of the mountains*" (*Deut.* xxxii. 22); and the Psalmist, speaking to the Almighty, says, "*Who makest the clouds Thy chariot; Who walkest on the wings of the winds, and makest Thy ministers a burning fire.*" (*Ps.* ciii. 3.) This purifying fire shall purify the heavens above and the earth beneath, as gold is purified in the furnace, till all the dross is separated from it, and only the pure gold remains. How wonderful is God in His works! &c.

5. But this process of purification is to leave after it a residue of matter in the form of ashes or cinders, after the great conflagration. This is to be got rid of. Yes, it is to be swept away from the face of the earth, and cast down with the damned into hell: "*Our God shall come,*" says the Psalmist, "*and a mighty tempest shall be round about Him.*" (*Ps.* xlix 3). Yes, a tempest or hurricane shall blow over the earth's surface, and collect together the burnt-up impurities left by the purifying fire, and precipitate them into the infernal abyss, thus accomplishing the first process of the great renewal, which is to produce the new earth and the new heaven revealed to St. John, as we read in his Apocalypse (*Apoc.* xxi.)

6. The second part of the renewal is the embellishment or beautifying of the world now purified. This embellishment is to consist chiefly in illumination: "*And the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, as the light of seven days,*" says Isaias (xxx. 26). The Almighty dwells in light inaccessible: all the heavenly spirits encircling His throne are radiant with light: and brightness is to be a property of the glorified bodies of the saints; "*They shall shine,*" says our Divine Lord, "*as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.*" (*Matt.* xiii. 43). The power of seeing approaches nearer than any of our other senses to the spiritual order, and, therefore, the chief happiness of the glorified bodies of the saints will be in the sight-seeing of the great and glorious

things that will be displayed to their vision in a state of glory. On this account, everything is to be illuminated, and the heavenly bodies, shining at present over our heads, shall have their lights increased, not, indeed, with the dazzling power which is, at present, occasionally hurtful to our weak vision, but with a soft, genial, and soothing effulgence, which will be most enjoyable to behold. "*Glorious things are said of thee, O city of God*," says the Psalmist, "*The dwelling in thee is as it were of all rejoicing.*" (*Ps.* lxxxvi. 3, 7).

7. In this general illumination, the earth will have her own light, and will no longer require the light of the sun, moon, or stars, although these luminaries will continue still to shine upon her, and even with increased brilliancy. Trees and plants, as well as the various works of the hands of men, cities and towns, with their houses, palaces, and monuments, will have been all swept away, as also the various forms of mere animal life, in the general conflagration. Having served their various purposes for the use of man, they will be needed no longer, and the earth thus disembarrassed of her encumbrances will, under the omnipotent hand of her Creator, put on a new surface all radiant with light, whilst the sea, lulled in everlasting repose, shall become as shining crystal, and the air cleared of all clouds and vapours shall be transparent as heaven itself. "*Glorious things are said of thee, O city of God!*"

8. And in this new and glorious order of things, there is to be "*no change, nor shadow of alteration*" (*James* i. 17); no night, no day, no times, no seasons. All is fixed, and so remains, for the messenger of God with uplifted hand has already sworn that "*time shall be no longer.*" (*Apoc.* x. 6). Time has passed into eternity. Consequently the earth has discontinued her revolutions for evermore. No more diurnal, no more annual revolutions. The purposes of these changes have ceased, and all has become still, immovable, and everlastingly stationary.

9. And what is now to happen? Wonders upon wonders have taken place. But the great wonder, for which all the wonders that have occurred, are only a preparation, is now to be accomplished. St. John has seen it in vision, and he describes it in words the most thrilling: "*And I John*," says he, "*saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride for her husband. And I heard a great voice from the throne, saying: Behold the tabernacle of God with men,*

and He will dwell with them. And they shall be His people, and God Himself with them shall be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes: and death shall be no more, nor mourning, nor crying, nor sorrow shall be any more, for the former things are passed away." (*Apoc.* xxi. 1, 2, 3, 4). To understand these mysterious words, we must look back a little, and recollect that the Great Judge, after having pronounced sentence on the assembled myriads of mankind, in the Valley of Josaphat, headed in triumph the glorious procession of the elect to the mansions of everlasting happiness, to present them to His Eternal Father, as the fruits of His victory over sin and hell; and to have their appointments, in the many mansions to be assigned to the blessed, according to their degrees of merit, and in pursuance of His own most loving words: "*In my Father's house there are many mansions: and I go to prepare a place for you.* (*John* xiv. 2). What a spectacle to contemplate! What will be the glory of the just! "How great the joy of the saints," exclaims St. Augustine, "when every face will shine like the sun! When, in their respective orders, the Lord is to begin to review His people in the kingdom of His Father, and will give them their promised rewards according to their individual merits. O! verily it will be the highest degree of happiness, when the Lord will introduce His saints into the vision of His Father's glory, and assign them their places in the abodes of heaven, that God may be to them all in all for ever." (*Manuale*, xv. 2).

The three divisions of the Church of God exist no longer. There is no longer a Church Militant on earth, or a Church Suffering in Purgatory, for, as St. Paul says, "*The old things are passed away, behold all things are made new.*" (*2 Cor.* v. 17). Yes, the old state of things—the division—"*the middle wall of partition is broken down.*" (*Ephes.* ii. 14). "*There are no more strangers or foreigners: but all are fellow-citizens with the saints, and the domestics of God, built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner-stone: in Whom all the building, being framed together, groweth up into an holy temple in the Lord.*" (*Ibid.* 19, 20, 21). There is now but one Universal Church, the Church Triumphant, and in the vision of St. John we behold the earth—this very earth, after it has been purified, beautified, and renewed—taken into connection and united with this Universal Triumphant Church, so as to form with it part of the heavenly Jerusalem, and realize the

great and glorious fact of a heaven upon earth: "*I John*," says the Apostle, "*saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride for her husband.*" O glorious sight! This valley of tears to become an abode of the just, where God Himself will be their God, and wipe away all tears from their eyes, so that there will be no more death, nor mourning, nor crying, nor sorrow; for all this is passed away, and this land of exile is become the home of a portion of the just, their true heaven, where they will abide in the enjoyment of their God for ever. O happy transformation! O blessed renewal of this nether world, to be thus associated with the heavenly Jerusalem, and made part of heaven itself!

Conclusion.

And now, having brought this great renewal before our minds, are we not to ask ourselves how far we are interested in it? O what a question! We will be then in existence, each and every one of us, with the same body and the same soul we now possess. And what part shall we have in the great and wonderful scenes we have been reviewing? Alas! if we be amongst those who are to be driven away from the judgment seat with the sentence, "*Begone ye cursed*," &c., we shall have no part in the new heaven and the new earth, and their association with the heavenly Jerusalem. What a motive, "*to work out our salvation in fear and trembling*" (*Phil.* ii. 12); and how should we not, as St. Peter admonishes, "*labour the more, that by our good works we make sure our calling and election.*" (2 *Pet.* i. 10). Oh! let us in all our works remember our last end, and instead of sinning, or remaining in sin, we will use all the energies of soul and body to make sure our arrival, after our pilgrimage here below, "*to Mount Sion, and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to the company of many thousands of angels, and to the church of the first-born, who are written in the heavens, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of the just made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the New Testament, and to the sprinkling of blood which speaketh better than that of Abel. Amen.*" (*Heb.* xii. 22 *et seq.*)

Consult St. Thomas, "Summa Minor," vol. v. tract. xlvi. quest. 74 and 91, "*de resurrectione et vita æterna*," also Commentators, on *chap.* xxi. *Apoc.*

[N.B.—Impress on your own mind the various points, and try to find your own language.]

THIRTY-NINTH DISCOURSE
ON
THE APOSTLES' CREED;
AND
SECOND ON THE TWELFTH ARTICLE.

"*I believe in life everlasting.*"

Introduction.

In a former discourse we considered the great mystery of the resurrection of the dead, and we saw all the dead, both great and small, as described by St. John, assembled in the valley of Josaphat, awaiting the descent of the Great Judge. We witnessed His descent, as He came down in great power and majesty, in the midst of His angels, who accompanied Him. We beheld the separation of the good from the bad, and we heard the final sentence of each; that happy sentence which is to confirm the good in the enjoyment of everlasting bliss, and that terrible sentence which is to consign the wicked to everlasting torments. And finally we saw the Judge as conqueror of sin, death and hell, ascending and taking possession of His throne of majesty, on the right hand of His Eternal Father, having made His enemies His footstool. These thrilling scenes, which faith displays to our view, have prepared us to look forward, as we did in our last discourse, "*for new heavens and a new earth according to the Divine promises, in which justice dwelleth*" (2 *Peter* iii. 13); and "*the light of the moon*," as Isaias foretells, "*shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun as the light of seven days*" (*Isai.* xxx. 26), in that universal renewal, in which the Almighty, according to the words of the Apocalpyse, will make all things new: and time will have ceased, to give place to the never-ending day of "*life everlasting;*" the great mystery we announced as the twelfth and final Article of the Apostles' Creed.

Preliminary Explanation.

Life everlasting, in the general acceptation of the expression, means everlasting happiness with God in heaven. Neverthe-

less, as it takes our thoughts into the other world, and as we cannot but recollect, that, besides a state of everlasting happiness, there is also, in that other world, a state of everlasting misery, and that between these two states there is a third, which is to continue till the last day, and then cease, we shall take occasion from this final Article of the Creed to treat of these three states, devoting to them four distinct discourses, as we have already announced. One on hell, a second on heaven, a third on purgatory, and a fourth on eternity. I need not bespeak your attention to these subjects. Their thrilling importance, involving as they do our future destiny in the world to come, commands our most earnest attention.

I therefore begin, without further preface, with the subject of hell this evening, going down in spirit with the prophet Isaias to the gates of that darksome abyss, where no order, but everlasting horror, has fixed its abode. Yes, let us say with Isaias this evening, "*In the midst of my days I shall go to the gates of hell*" (*Isai.* xxxviii. 10); that is, whilst yet alive here on earth, that we may escape the terrible misfortune of being cast into that place of unutterable woe after death.

[Invoke a blessing and proceed to]

Body of the Subject.

1. *The sufferings of hell greater than any we are acquainted with in this world.* Why? Because in all the sufferings of this world there is a limit to the power which causes the sufferings, and a limit to the enduring capability of the sufferer. But in hell there is no limit; none on the part of the cause, which is the Almighty power of God, and none on the part of the victim, who cannot be relieved even by death, which puts an end to all the woes of this life. Some unfortunate sinners are maddened to commit suicide in this world. Unhappy victims! what shall they do in hell? They cannot shoot themselves there, they cannot hang themselves there, &c. Alas! "*they shall seek death*," as is said in the Apocalypse, "*and shall not find it: they shall desire to die, and death shall fly from them.*" (*Apoc.* ix. 6). Therefore let us take account of the various kinds of sufferings which can afflict us here below.

[Here go through a detail of various painful diseases, amongst the rest relating the sores of Lazarus at the rich glutton's gate, and those of Job covered with ulcers; to which add a summary of the

torments of the martyrs : to these sufferings of the body, add still all kinds of suffering that can afflict the mind ; and suppose all to be increased a thousandfold, and heaped on one single victim ; after which say, all these pains and tortures do not give us the faintest idea of the pains and sufferings of the damned.]

St. Paul, speaking of the happiness of heaven, says, "*eye hath not seen*," *&c.*, so too must we say of the misery of hell, "*eye hath not seen*," *&c.* (1 *Cor.* ii. 9). Therefore our Saviour warns us (*Matt.* x. 28), "*to fear not them that kill the body*," *&c.*

2. *What are the sufferings of the damned?* Of two kinds, those that shall torment the body, and those that shall torment the soul.

In those of the body, three circumstances are to be noticed : their intensity, their universality, and that they are unremitting.

Their intensity. To have some idea of it, let us go again with the prophet to the gates of hell, and look into that region of fire which opens to our view ; yes, a region of fire. Our faith presents it to us in the most express terms. (**Quote two or three passages referred to at the end of the Bible**, *under title* "Eternity of Hell's Torments.") Look, therefore, into that region of fire ; what do you behold ? Your own fellow-beings, men and women, who lived once on this earth, as you do now, some of whom you perhaps have known, with whom you often spoke familiarly, &c. Behold them in the midst of these dreadful flames ; see the smoke of their torments, as it ascends from the infernal abyss. It is in view of this terrific scene that Isaias cries out : "*Which of you can dwell with devouring fire? Which of you shall dwell with everlasting burnings?*" (*Isaias* xxxiii. 14). Oh ! imagine yourselves for one half-hour in this place. What do I say ? Nay, place your finger in the blaze of a candle. How long could you endure it ? If you got a kingdom for it, would you endure it five minutes ? Yet the fire, with which we are acquainted, is scarcely fire at all compared with the fire of hell. The fire with which we are acquainted, is given us for our enjoyment and benefit, but the fire of hell has been created to be the agent of God's vengeance, a fire which is a thousand times more active than our fire, a fire that acts not only on the body, but also on the soul of the unfortunate victim. O the intensity of the torments of hell ! O sinners ! whither are you rushing headlong ! O sinners ! ask yourselves the question, can you dwell with devouring fire, &c.?

Their universality. The pains and torments we are acquainted with in this world are partial in their nature, affecting only some part or parts of the body, but leaving the rest of the body free. Alas! it is different in hell. Every one of the senses has its own special torment. (**Go over the various senses,** *sight, hearing, smelling, tasting and feeling.* Respecting the last, **observe** how it not only extends over the surface of the whole body, but pervades it through and through to the very vitals and the marrow of the bones, and there is not a particle of the whole that is not capable of the most intense pain. **Ask** what part of your body is there, where you could bear a spark of fire to be applied to you? What, therefore, to be buried in fire; fire under you, over you, on all sides of you; fire penetrating every part of your body, from its surface to its centre, &c.

The torments of the damned unremitting. "*They have no rest day or night,*" says St. John (*Apoc.* xiv. 11). **Represent** a person in the most racking pain. He hopes, however, that it will sooner or later be over. In the morning he hopes to be better in the evening, or in the evening he hopes to be better in the morning, at worst, death will put an end to his suffering. But the sufferer in hell has no such hope, no rest, no abatement day or night.

[Illustrate by the example of the rich glutton seeking a moment's alleviation, not for his whole body, but only that Lazarus should dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool for an instant his burning tongue.]

3. *The sufferings that torment the soul.* **Quote** "*Where their worm dieth not.*" (*Mark* ix. 45). What is this worm? The worm of remorse, which is to gnaw the soul of the damned. It shall gnaw the three powers of the soul, the memory, the understanding, and the will.

Dwell upon each separately; frequently making the damned soul speak, expressing her remorse: in the *memory*, by recollecting the means and facilities she had for being saved; in the *understanding*, by reflecting on the immensity of her loss in losing God, and on the worthlessness of the things for which she incurred so great a loss; in the *will*, by her essential tendency to be united with God, whilst she must remain constantly separated from him. **Illustrate** this by the tortures inflicted on some of the martyrs, by being dragged asunder by horses that were tied to them, and drawn in opposite directions.

In these various tortures of the soul, the damned give themselves up to rage and despair, cursing the day they were born, the parents that gave them birth, the power that created them, &c.

Conclusion.

Conclude by observing, that what you have said, and everything that could be said, cannot convey an adequate idea of the torments of the damned in hell Quote again, "*Eye hath not seen*," *&c.* Then suppose one of the damned were allowed to return to life, and ask what would he do? Would he not, if necessary, go round the world on his knees, &c.? Alas! vain supposition. Suppose, again, any of our acquaintances were allowed to come out of hell here amongst us, what advice would he give us, &c.? Alas! again vain supposition. Quote the rich glutton requesting to be allowed to warn his brothers, and the answer. Finish by saying you have been sounding in their ears the threatening of the law and the prophets, and that you will end by asking with the prophet Isaias, "*Which of you could dwell*," *&c.*

N.B.—Intersperse exclamations of horror, as you go along, especially at the end of the points. Make several Apostrophes to the sinner, avoiding reflections by way of moral inferences, which would cool the subject, till you come to the end.

Consult "St. Liguori's Sermons," "Challoner's Meditations," and "Hell open to Christians."

FORTIETH DISCOURSE

ON

THE APOSTLES' CREED;

AND

THIRD ON THE TWELFTH ARTICLE.

"*I believe in life everlasting.*"

Introduction.

We are hurrying on to the life to come: every day, every hour, every moment advances us nearer and nearer to the decisive moment when we must leave this world "*to go into the house of eternity*," (*Eccles.* xii. 5), where happiness unspeak-

able, or misery beyond description, awaits us. Having, therefore, considered this misery in our last discourse, as far as our limited minds could form any conception of it, we will seek consolation this evening in dwelling, as well as we can, on the happiness which God in His goodness and mercy has prepared for us in the kingdom of His glory. If, therefore, we have gone down with the Prophet "*in the midst of our days to the gates of hell*" (*Isai.* xxxviii. 10), in order to escape the dreadful lot of being cast into that region of fire, after our time in this world, let us ascend this evening, in our imagination, to heaven, that, contemplating the happiness of that blissful kingdom, we may, with the aid of God's grace, render ourselves worthy of being admitted to it, on closing our career in this valley of tears.

[Invoke a blessing, &c.]

BODY OF THE SUBJECT.

1. *Impossible view of heaven.* O heaven! how shall I speak of it? Can I hope to give you a full view of it? How can I, or could I, hope it, when St. Paul found the task impossible. "*Neither eye hath seen*," *&c.* (1 *Cor.* ii. 9). St. Augustine, meditating on heaven, thought with himself if he could give an adequate description of it in a treatise he might write on the subject, heard a voice from some invisible speaker, saying to him: "Augustine, what art thou thinking of? Dost thou think it possible to drain off the waters of the ocean, or to grasp in thy hand the immense globe of the earth, or to cause the heavenly bodies to suspend the course of their motion? Dost thou desire to see what no eyes have seen, to hear what no ears have heard? Dost thou think, that thou canst understand what no human intelligence hath ever conceived, nor human understanding hath imagined? All these impossibilities must become possible, before thou become capable of giving an idea of the least part of the glory the blessed enjoy in heaven." (Nierem. b. 5). We may, therefore, multiply words and phrases, we may bring to our aid all the resources of rhetoric, we may exhaust all the powers of languages, &c.; in the end we find ourselves where we were in the beginning in presence of an impossible task of describing, &c. **Appeal**, to lift up their hearts on high, and "*press forward*," with the Apostle "*towards the prize that awaits us, the prize of our supernal vocation in Christ Jesus.*" (*Phil.* iii. 14).

2. *Negative view.* But, while it is impossible to describe, or even conceive, the happiness of heaven, we can have some glimpses of it, obscure glimpses, to be sure, as "*seeing through a glass,*" with the Apostle, "*in a dark manner, but hoping to see one day face to face, and know even as we are known.*" (1 *Cor.* xiii. 12). The first view which these glimpses afford us of heaven is to see what heaven is *not*, but not what heaven *is*. If, in endeavouring to display this view, I say heaven is exempt from, &c.

[Here enumerate several catalogues of miseries in this life, spiritual, corporal, internal, and external, beginning each by saying: "If in attempting to describe heaven, I say it is exempt from so and so," naming them, after which repeat, "If, I say, in attempting to describe heaven, I should say it is exempt from all these evils, I tell you what heaven is *not*, but not what heaven *is*.]

Apply this consideration by inculcating a disgust for this life, abounding with so many evils, **saying**: "Oh! that we had the spirit of St. Paul, to consider all things here below as loss, as dung! (*Phil.* iii. 8), in view of that kingdom, where God shall wipe away all tears from our eyes," &c. (*Apoc.* xxi. 4).

3. *The comparative view.* St. Paul tells us, that the invisible things of God, and of his heavenly kingdom, are in some degree made known by the visible things of this world (*Rom.* i. 20). **Ask**, therefore, is there anything here on earth calculated to give us an idea of heaven?

[Here go **through a summary** of all that is admired in this world, or **describe** a gorgeous palace, surrounded with splendid scenery, ornamented all around with beautiful pleasure-grounds, &c., in a beautiful climate; and **conclude** that all this splendour is as darkness compared with brilliant sunshine, as we contemplate the magnificence of heaven.]

Relate the passages of the Queen of Saba (3 *Kings* c. x.) **applying** it with an "*a fortiori.*"

4. *Approximate view.* **Ask**, but does not God Himself give us some idea of heaven in the Holy Scriptures? Yes, but the idea is still imperfect: imperfect, because our minds, limited as they are, can admit no other. If, therefore, "*glorious things are said of thee, O city of God!*" (*Ps.* lxxxvi. 3); if thou are called city of eternal life, of eternal glory, of eternal happiness; if thy gates be described as of pearl, thy walls of jasper, thy streets of pure

gold, needing neither sun nor moon, "*the Lamb being the lamp thereof*," *&c.* (*Apoc.* xxi.); if thy inhabitants are represented as clothed with glory and honour, with palms in their hands, and diadems on their heads, feasting on the plenty of God's own House, and drinking of the torrent of His delight, flowing from beneath the throne of the Most High, &c.: O city of God, these glorious things are said of thee by God Himself, and we may, indeed, fall into ecstacy, and swoon away, in view of such riches and glory, &c.; in the end, however, we must say with St. Paul, "*Neither eye hath seen*," *&c.* (1 *Cor.* ii. 9). Nevertheless, the Apostle exhorts us to ascend in spirit to our heavenly country, and comfort ourselves with a prospect of its happiness, whilst yet journeying on through this valley of tears; and as if we had already reached it, he exclaims, "*Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; and make straight steps with your feet . . . for you are come to Mount Sion, and to the city of the living God, the Heavenly Jerusalem, and to the company of many thousands of saints.*" (*Heb.* xii.) And St. John would present to us the vision of this glorious company, saying: "*I saw a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and tribes, and peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne, and in sight of the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands: and they cried with a loud voice, saying, 'Salvation to our God, who sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb.' And all the angels stood round about the throne, and the ancients, and the four living creatures: and they fell down before the throne upon their faces, and adored God, saying, 'Amen. Benediction and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, honour, and power, and strength to our God for ever and ever. Amen.'*" (*Apoc.* vii.)

"*Glorious things are said of thee, O city of God!*" To realize, as best we can, these glorious things, let us suppose the great wonders to have taken place which St. John mentions, when he says: "*I saw a new heaven and a new earth. For the first heaven and the first earth was gone, and the sea is now no more. And I, John, saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice from the throne, saying: Behold the tabernacle of God with men, and He will dwell with them. And they shall be His people: and God Himself with them shall be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes: and death shall be no more, nor mourning, nor crying, nor sorrow*

shall be any more, for the former things are passed away . . . and I make all things new . . . I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end." (*Apoc.* xxi.) Let us in effect suppose that the Last Judgment has taken place, and that we are of the happy number of the elect, having heard the blissful invitation: "*Come, ye blessed of My Father, possess you the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.*" (*Matt.* xxv. 34). Let us suppose ourselves in actual possession of this heavenly kingdom, occupying the thrones left vacant by the fallen angels: O what a supposition! But let us not call it a supposition: it is more; it is our hope, a hope, let me add, founded on the promise, nay, upon the oath, of God Himself—a hope which, according to the words of the Apostle, "*we have as an anchor of the soul, sure and firm, and which entereth in even within the veil, where the forerunner Jesus is entered for us, made a High Priest for ever according to the order of Melchisedech.*" (*Heb.* vi. 19, 20). Yes, let me invite you to come, and let us go together within this veil, and enjoy beforehand the glorious sight which our hope presents to us. O what a spectacle! the saints and the elect from the beginning of the world, headed by the venerable parents of the human race, and with them Abel the just, and Seth, father of a holy generation called the sons of God, and Enos, who began to call upon the name of the Lord, and Enoch the prophet pleasing to God in all his ways, and translated, that he might not see death: and then Noah the preacher of justice, who, saved from the deluge with all his family, was made a second universal parent of mankind; and then Abraham, the great father of a multitude of nations, and with him Isaac and Jacob, co-heirs of the same promise; and then the twelve Patriarchs, great in their generation; and then the beloved of God, Moses with Aaron his brother, deliverers of the people of God; and then Josue, and Caleb and Samuel, and the other Judges valiant in war, who, overthrowing the enemies that rose up against them, finally established the children of Israel in the Promised Land; and then Nathan the Prophet, and David according to God's own heart; and then Elias and Eliseus, and Jeremias and Ezechiel, and the other prophets, who, "*with a great spirit saw the things that were to come to pass at last, and comforted the mourners in Sion*" (*Eccli.* xlviii. 27); and then the valiant Machabees, who fought so gloriously the battles of Israel, and gave their lives for the covenant of their fathers; and then Joachim and Anne,

the privileged parents of Mary; and Joseph her chaste spouse, and the Baptist, "*than whom there had not risen a greater amongst the sons of men.*" (*Matt.* xi. 11). O what a sight to behold! these glorious saints of the Old Law, who, believing beforehand in the coming of the Redeemer, walked before God and found favour in His sight. But we are yet to keep our eyes uplifted, and, with admiring gaze, survey the ranks of the elect under the New Law. O what a glorious sight! The Apostles of Christ, who had left all things to follow Him, and "*whose sound hath gone forth into all the earth,*" and "*their words unto the ends of the whole world.*" (*Rom.* x. 18). O what an enchanting spectacle do they present, seated on their thrones, and crowned with glory and honour! And next in order the heroic army of martyrs, who, in their day, looking on Jesus, the Author and Finisher of their Faith, with Him and for Him resisted unto blood. O how the Lord hath prevented them with the blessings of His sweetness, and set on their heads crowns of precious stones, a thousand times more brilliant than the diadems that adorn the brows of the princes, kings, and emperors of this world. And there are the noble bands of confessors, popes, and bishops, and holy priests, who by Faith conquered kingdoms, subjecting them to the empire of Christ. In return they are before the throne of God, serving him day and night, clothed in white, having washed their robes, and made them white, in the blood of the Lamb; and with them the countless legions of holy anchorites, and various religious companies, who, from age to age, edified the Church of God. Their lives were considered folly by the votaries of a corrupt world, and their end without honour: but now see how they are counted amongst the sons of God, and their lot is amongst the saints. Lo! who are they, who wait in attendance upon the Lamb? A hundred and forty-four thousand, having His name and the name of His Father written on their foreheads, singing as it were a new canticle before the throne—a canticle which they alone can sing. Oh! they are the holy virgins, who, having lived the life of angels here upon earth, merit the special distinction in heaven of accompanying the Lamb wheresoever He goeth, being without spot before the throne of God. And lifting up our eyes still farther, what is this new spectacle of glory, which breaks upon our view? The angelic hosts in their tens of thousands, divided into their various

hierarchies and orders, the angels and archangels, the thrones and dominations, the powers, principalities and virtues, the cherubim and seraphim. O how glorious the hope, how enchanting the prospect, of being associated with these angelic choirs in chanting, before the throne of the Most High: Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Sabaoth, the heavens and the earth, &c. But as we lift up our eyes still higher, who is she, seated aloft above men and angels, belonging to no order or rank, because above all orders and ranks, beautiful as the moon, bright as the sun, and on her head a crown of twelve stars? O how transporting the sight! The glory of Jerusalem, the joy of Israel, the honour of our people—Immaculate Mary, the specially beloved Daughter of the Eternal Father, the Mother of the Eternal Son, the ever-beloved Spouse of the Holy Ghost. O how enchanting the prospect, how animating the hope, to see Mary in all her glory seated side by side with her Divine Son, the Queen of Angels and of men, and Sovereign Lady of the Universe. And from the Mother our eyes must turn to the glorious Humanity of her Only Begotten. O the Humanity of our Saviour in glory! When for a moment He displayed His glory to Peter, James and John, in His transfiguration, these holy Apostles swooned away in ecstacy at the sight, and not knowing what to say, Peter exclaimed: "*O Lord, it is good to be here, let us make three tabernacles, one for Thee, one for Moses, and one for Elias.*" So absorbed were they in the vision, that forgetting everything else, they only desired to continue in the happiness that inundated their souls, as they beheld their Lord and Master in the glory of His transfiguration. And this is the spectacle, delightful, transporting, and enchanting, which our Blessed Redeemer is to present in His glorious Humanity, for the joy and happiness of His elect in the kingdom of heaven. St. Augustine, speaking of the happiness of beholding the Humanity of Christ in glory, is so transported with the subject, as to say: "Were it necessary to go through the torments of hell in order to see Christ in His glory, we should be ready to undergo all that is dreadful in that place of woe, in order to be made partakers of so great a happiness." (*Manuale*, ch. xv. I.)

But O heavenly glory! what have we been contemplating? Thy essence? O no! there is a breadth, a length, a height, and a depth, we have not yet got a sight of. It remains for us

to behold Him, Who dwells in light inaccessible, and to behold Him no longer as here below, "*in a dark manner, and as through a glass, but face to face,*" and so beholding Him, to share "*in His own very happiness.*" O yes; His own very happiness, because He Himself has said it, "*enter into the joy of thy Lord,*" to be, as St. Bernardine of Sienna expresses it, "*encompassed with it, absorbed in it, and engulfed in it, as in an infinite abyss.*"—*6th Lesson, Office of Patronage of St. Joseph.* The beloved Disciple looking forward to this happiness declares, "*Dearly beloved, we are now the sons of God, and it hath not yet appeared what we shall be but we know when He shall appear,*" that is, when we shall see Him "*face to face,*" "*we shall be like to Him, because we shall see Him, as He is.*" (1 *John* iii. 2). O! to see God as He is, to see Him face to face, to receive from Him, and to reflect back upon Him, the light of His light, the splendour of His glory; and to be transformed, as St. Paul expresses it, "*into the same image from glory to glory as by the spirit of the Lord.*" (2 *Cor.* iii. 18). O let me say it again, to see God face to face, and thus "*to behold the glory of the Lord with open face,*" according to the words of the same Apostle (*Ibid.*), and in His glory to contemplate the omnipotence of the Father, Who created heaven and earth, the wisdom of the Son, Who by His supreme providence governs the universe, the goodness and love of the Holy Ghost, the inexhaustible fountain of all blessings: to behold the Divine Trinity, one God in three Persons, three Persons in one God, in an abyss of resplendent brightness, and the theatre of His Majesty in the centre of His glory. O happiness! "*one drop of which, if it fell into hell, would at once,*" as St. Augustine assures us, "*convert the misery of the damned into joy and delight.*" O happiness! which fills up all the desires of the soul, which leaves nothing to be wished for more. "*O how lovely, O Lord, are Thy tabernacles; O Lord of Hosts! my soul longeth and fainteth for the courts of the Lord. Blessed are they that dwell in Thy house, O Lord: they shall praise Thee for ever and ever* (*Ps.* lxxxiii.); *and they shall be inebriated with the plenty of Thy house: and Thou shalt make them drink of the torrent of Thy pleasure. For with Thee is the fountain of life, and in Thy light we shall see light.*" (*Ps.* xxxv. 9, 10).

Conclusion.

And having endeavoured to form some idea of the happiness of heaven, I will conclude by asking you, what will you do to secure to yourselves this blessed inheritance? That you may answer this question let me make a supposition. Suppose that any of you got information, that a friend of yours had died in America or Australia; that he was immensely rich; that he had acquired a vast estate most beautifully situated, with a gorgeous mansion, and property of all kinds to a fabulous amount, and that he had left it all to you, what would you say on receiving such tidings? Would you not say, "Yes, I will go; country, friends, family will be no hindrance; sufferings, fatigues, hardships by land and sea will be no impediment. I will set out for this great inheritance, which Providence offers me, to spend the rest of my days in comfort and enjoyment." Here then am I, the messenger of God, to tell you more glorious tidings. Your friend, your best friend, has died, and has died for you; and, by dying, has purchased for you an inheritance, the glory of which, "*neither eye hath seen*," *&c.* What will you do to possess it? I don't require you to travel over seas and lands: all that is necessary is, that you repent of your sins, that you seek to be reconciled with your offended Creator, that you walk henceforth in the paths of God's Holy Law, working out your salvation in fear and trembling, and persevering to the end: for the promise is assured to you, that if, so doing, you persevere to the end, you shall be saved.

[Take such of the foregoing points as you can best master. After each, incite in your audience hopes and desires of heaven, contempt of worldly vanities, &c., by short appeals.]

Instead of *the negative* view you might employ an *inferential* view, consisting of two considerations as follows:—

1. The price paid for any property gives an idea of the nature of the property: that is, say a person has paid a hundred thousand pounds for a property, you would expect to find a grand demesne, a gorgeous palace, &c. Let us enlarge the idea, and suppose a man to be possessed of the treasure of the universe, and that he conceived the idea of realizing the greatest happiness that can be attained in this world: what would he do? Likely he would send some person in search of the best climate in the world, that, having found it, he would employ

the best architects to plan the most sumptuous palace that ever existed; that he would embellish it with all the charms of art, &c. What would you expect to find in this abode of splendour, &c.? It costs a fabulous amount of money; this is the test. Now, what has the kingdom of heaven cost, for it is a purchase? Gold and silver? No. Precious stones? No; all these are only dross in comparison. It has cost the blood of an Incarnate God. And by whom is it constructed, ornamented, &c.? By an all-wise and all-powerful God.

2. This visible world lifts up our minds in some degree, however small, to an idea of heaven.

Here go through a summary description of all that is great, magnificent, &c., in this world, after which observe that God destined all this not only for His elect but also for sinners; not only for human beings, but for brute animals, and the worms that crawl on the earth's surface, &c. Hence infer how much more magnificent the Kingdom He has prepared for us, for His elect, for His angels, for Mary Immaculate, for Himself, &c., &c.

Consult standard preachers: and after having studied the subject and digested it fully, use your own mind in the arrangement and composition of the materials, taking account of your capacity and powers of delivery. For a concluding exhortation, see St. Cyprian ("*de Mortalitate*," iv. v. vi. lessons of Matins for the Octave day of All Saints).

FORTY-FIRST DISCOURSE

ON

THE APOSTLES' CREED;

AND

FOURTH ON THE TWELFTH ARTICLE.

"*It is a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from their sins.*"—2 MAC. xii. 46.

INTRODUCTION.

The Royal Prophet, speaking of God as everywhere present, asks the question: "*Whither shall I go from Thy spirit, or whither shall I flee from Thy face? If I ascend into heaven,*

Thou art there; if I descend into hell, Thou art present. If I take my wings early in the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there also shall Thy hand lead me, and Thy right hand shall hold me." (*Ps.* cxxxviii. 7, 8, 9, 10). Thus is it that the Almighty Ruler of the universe is everywhere by the immensity of His being. If, therefore, conducted, as it were, by His right hand, we have gone down to the depths of hell, and soared aloft to the heights of heaven, in our two last discourses, we will commit ourselves this evening to His divine guidance, to descend into the regions of purgatory, to witness the reign of His justice in the suffering of these poor souls, who are there detained for a time, before they can be admitted into heaven. We have two most important fruits to reap from this subject, one, pity for the poor sufferers of purgatory, that we may relieve them; the other, a salutary fear for ourselves, that we may settle our accounts, as best we can, with the Supreme Judge, whilst we are yet in the way of this mortal life, according to the advice of our Divine Saviour; lest, when we fall into His hands, He may be obliged by His justice to cast us into prison, the prison of purgatory, from which, as He Himself declares, we shall not go out till we shall have paid the last farthing (*Matt.* v. 25, 26).

Invite attention; and a word of invocation.]

1. *The doctrine of purgatory.* Who are condemned to it? It is to cease on the last day, when souls then recently condemned to it, shall have the shortness of their sufferings made up for by their increased severity.

2. *The intensity of the pains of purgatory.* Quote St. Augustine: "The fire of purgatory will be more tormenting than anything we can suffer in this life;" and again, that "it will be more rigorous than all we can feel, see, or think of suffering in this world." Here go through a rapid enumeration of the various sufferings of the martyrs, &c., and say, that if all were accumulated upon one single sufferer, they would fall short of the least of the pains of purgatory. *The reason:* because, according to the general teaching of the Fathers of the Church, the instrument of punishment is fire; fire, in comparison with which, the fire we are acquainted with in this world, is but a shadow or picture; a fire which by the power of God acts upon the soul, though a spiritual substance; a fire, in fine, the same as the

fire of hell, except that it is not to last for ever. **Conclude the point by saying,** that as St. Paul, speaking of the happiness of heaven, has said, "*that neither eye hath seen,*" *&c., &c.* (1 *Cor.* ii. 9), so also may we say that neither eye hath seen, &c., the dreadful sufferings that God has prepared in purgatory for the poor souls, whom, in His justice, He will have to condemn to that region of woe.

[Expressions of sympathy for the poor souls in purgatory.]

3. Besides the pain of sense, such as I have attempted to put before you, the poor souls in purgatory have to suffer another pain not less tormenting, the pain of loss, consisting in this, that, knowing God, and loving Him with the most intense love, they expect to be one day admitted into His presence in the kingdom of heaven, and to see Him face to face; and in this expectation they are carried forward with the most inflamed ardour, with the most irresistible transports of love, crying out: "*Alas, that our sojourning is prolonged!*" (*Ps.* cxix. 5). "*Who will give me wings like a dove, and I will fly and be at rest in Thee, O my God?*" (*Ps.* liv. 7).

[Describe, for illustration, a dove confined by a cord, that binds it to a stake; how it struggles to get free; how it flies as far as the cord will allow it; how still it continues to clap its wings, but all in vain; how it renews its endeavours, but to no effect; a faint example of a poor soul in purgatory springing forward, as if to take its flight to heaven, to the bosom of her God, but the hand of God's justice is heavy upon her. She renews the effort again and again, but again and again she is held back. Oh! who can describe the martyrdom she suffers, her agonies and tortures, worse even than those she suffers from the fire in which she is tormented.

4. *The duration of the sufferings of purgatory.* **Ask** how long are they to endure, and say: this we cannot know with regard to any particular soul, as the time must be longer or shorter according to the different amounts of debt or guilt different souls take with them out of this life. But we do know, as St. Paul tells us, that "*it is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.*" (*Heb.* x. 31). We know that "*nothing defiled can enter into the kingdom of heaven.*" (*Apoc.* xxi. 27). We know, as our Saviour declares, that, cast into the prison of God's justice, there is no release, "*till the last farthing be paid.*" (*Matt.* v. 26). All this we know, and we are told

terrible things besides by the saints of God, who had special revelations on the subject. St. Vincent Ferrer had a revelation, that some souls have to suffer an entire year on account of a single venial sin. Conceive a martyr like St. Laurence: conceive him a whole year on a gridiron over a slow fire. St. Lewis Bertrand relates of his own father, who was a very pious Christian, that he appeared to him after death, sighing and moaning in the most piteous manner, and begging his prayers. The saint accordingly prayed for his poor father, said Masses in abundance, and got others to pray and say Masses likewise for him. Nevertheless, the father continued to appear to him, from time to time, showing every time the same signs of suffering. The saint redoubled his endeavours with fastings and disciplines even to blood, and it was only at the end of eight long years he obtained his release. And what was the fault or faults of this good man? His son endeavoured to recollect, and could bring to his mind only one, that he had been over-much attached by a human affection to some person of rank, to whom he owed a deep debt of gratitude for favours he had received from him.

St. Bridget learned from one of her revelations, that there are souls in purgatory who shall not be released till the last day, and that all that can be done for them is to obtain some mitigation of their torments. This revelation is only in accord with the teaching of the Church, which authorises foundations for Masses in perpetuity for the souls of the faithful departed.

[Explain.]

5. *Who are these sufferers?* Our brethren, whom we are bound to love as we love ourselves, fellow-members with us in the mystic Body of Jesus Christ. Suppose we heard of any portion of our race suffering, in some remote part of the world, the one-hundredth part of what the poor sufferers of purgatory have to endure, what sympathy would be felt for them all over the entire globe, and what would not be done for their relief!

[Adduce the example of the slave trade in America, and all that was done to put an end to it, England alone paying twenty millions sterling for the purpose. **Apply the example** with an *a fortiori* inference.]

Ask again, who are these sufferers? and **reply**, neighbours

whom we knew, friends whom we loved; a beloved husband, an affectionate wife, &c.

Here draw upon all the endearments of the family circle: and represent, that these dear ones, suffering so intensely and so long, send forth their shrieks from the fire in which they are tormented, saying: "*Have pity on me, have pity on me, at least you my friends have pity on me.*" (*Job* xix. 21).

6. *The means of helping them. First means, the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.* **Explain,** that one of the chief ends of the Holy Sacrifice is to propitiate God for sin, that is, to make satisfaction to His Divine justice for sin; and this not only for the living, but for the souls of the faithful departed. On this account, there are several Masses in the Missal for these poor souls; a Mass for the day of death, another for the day of interment, others for the third, seventh, and thirtieth days, and another still for the twelve months' mind, and another, in fine, for any day whatsoever as permitted by the Rubrics; and, besides all this, there is one day of the year set apart by the Church for the relief of all the souls in purgatory, called All Souls' Day or the Commemoration of all Souls. Finally, the Church requires of her priests in the daily celebration of the Holy Sacrifice, that, after the Consecration, with the Divine Victim before them, they make a commemoration of the souls of the faithful departed. What a treasure here on earth does not the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass present for the poor souls in purgatory!

[Relate, that St. John Chrysostom saw angels assisting at the Holy Sacrifice, as he offered it, who, immediately as it was offered, took flight to purgatory to unbar its gates for the liberation of souls whose release was merited by the Mass he had celebrated.]

Second means, prayer. **Here point out** the example of the Church in the various forms of prayer she has composed for the poor sufferers of purgatory, and that in the Divine Office, which all ecclesiastics in holy orders are bound to recite every day, they terminate each of its seven divisions by the words, "*May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace.*" **Recommend** family night prayers, including some prayers in the end for the souls in purgatory, especially the deceased members of the family. **Mention** the practice of St. Bernard, who was in the habit of saying some prayers every night, during several years, for his deceased parents, but forgetting them one night, the accident was made known by revelation to his abbot, St. Stephen, who reminded him of it. **Add,** how consoling to a family, when rising from their prayers at night, to think that before going to bed they have assuaged, to

some degree at least, the pains of some departed members of the family on their beds of suffering in purgatory. Quote 1 *Thess.* iv. 12 ; applying which, say : how precious the thought, that, having secured by our prayers the release of our friends from purgatory, we shall have them as intercessors for us in heaven, asking for us the grace of a happy death, so that, passing out of this vale of tears, we may meet them on the threshold of eternity, to be welcomed by them into the realms of eternal bliss.

Third means, alms and penitential works, such as fasting, pilgrimages, &c., applied to their succour.

Fourth means, indulgences. **Explain** how several indulgences, general and particular, are left to our discretion to reserve them to ourselves, or apply them in the way of suffrage (explain) to the souls in purgatory.

7. So far we have been considering *one* of the fruits we are to derive from thinking of the pains of purgatory, namely, pity for the poor souls, who are confined in that region of woe.

We have but little to say on the second fruit, which is a salutary fear for ourselves, that, whilst we are on the way, we may avoid venial sin, and pay, moreover, the debts we owe to Divine justice for sin remitted as to its guilt and the eternal punishment it deserved. If we keep before our minds the thought of what purgatory is, the intensity of its pains, and their long duration, we should be more upon our guard to avoid not only venial sin, but even the very appearance of sin, as the Apostle advises us. We should shudder at the very thought of an evil, which would earn for us such a severe punishment in the next world And, as to the temporal debt due to the Divine justice, we should be more desirous to pay it beforehand, as so well we can, by indulgences and our own penitential endeavours.

Conclusion.

Conclude by laying down, that to help the poor suffering souls in purgatory is a greater charity than any we can do our fellow-creatures in this world. **Refer** to John the Baptist, who, when asked who he was, replied : "*I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, make straight the way of the Lord,*" *&c.* (*John* i. 23) ; and **say,** that your appeal in the present instance, is the voice of one crying in the desert of this world, echoing the shrieks of the poor sufferers of purgatory, as they cry to us from the midst of their torments, "*Have pity on me,*" *&c.*

Consult Theology ; "Butler's Lives of the Saints," the 2nd November ; and Guillet's "Projets d'Instructions," vol. 4, inst. cxi.

FORTY-SECOND DISCOURSE
ON
THE APOSTLES' CREED;
AND
FIFTH ON THE TWELFTH ARTICLE.

ETERNITY.

"*I believe in life everlasting.*"

Introduction.

The inspired Psalmist, addressing Almighty God, said to Him, "*If I ascend into heaven, Thou art there: if I descend into hell, Thou art present.*" (*Ps.* cxxxviii. 8). We have had experience of the truth of these words in our three last discourses. With the Prophet Isaias, "*we went down into hell in the midst of our days*," and there beheld an avenging God punishing the wicked in that abyss of woe. We also attempted on the wings of faith and hope to ascend into heaven, where we beheld the same Almighty God rewarding the good with a happiness that "*eye hath not seen*," *&c.* (1 *Cor.* ii. 9); and we visited the poor suffering souls in purgatory, to take account of their sufferings in this temporary place of woe, that we might have pity on them and help them, as also instruct ourselves to lead pure and holy lives here on earth, that our detention in purgatory be as short as possible, if we do not absolutely escape it. But these subjects should be incomplete unless we added that this unutterable misery, the misery of hell, and this unspeakable happiness, the happiness of heaven, are both eternal, *i.e.*, they are to last for ever and ever. O what a subject to dwell upon! Eternity! The eternity of heaven's joys and of hell's torments!

Need I ask you to give me your best attention whilst I endeavour to treat of this most thrilling subject? Does it not of itself command our most earnest attention, when we are convinced as Christians, that one or other of these eternities awaits us after having closed our career here below? Let us therefore raise our hearts on high, and beg, &c.

Body of the Subject.

1. Eternity! O Eternity! What a terrific word! And how much more terrific does it become when we add, eternity in hell, or eternity in heaven! How shall we approach such a subject? How frame our ideas respecting it? The rules of language allow, that in several cases we can exceed the limits of literal truth, and the excess, or exaggeration, is understood to be only a strong mode of conveying our thoughts or sentiments. But this principle has no application to the subject of eternity. Eternity in hell, or eternity in heaven! This is a subject, on which there can be no over-statement of language, no exaggeration of phrase. On the contrary, after having said all we can say, after having exhausted all the resources of rhetoric, we must conclude in avowing, that our words fall infinitely short of our ideas, and our ideas infinitely shorter still of the reality of the subject we attempt speaking on. Why this impotence of language? Why this inadequacy of idea or conception? Eternity we know is a species of infinity, and, therefore, we see at once, that with limited faculties, such as we possess, we cannot comprehend by any positive idea that which is infinite. Eternity is a kind of study, and the more we apply ourselves to it, the less we understand it; or, perhaps, to speak more correctly, the more we become convinced of our utter incapability of understanding it. It is said of St. Augustine, that walking once along the sea-shore, he applied his very powerful mind to the task of understanding, if he could, the mystery of the Adorable Trinity. As he went along, he came up to a child, whom he saw engaged in making a hole in the sand with a little sea-shell. The saint, giving up for a moment the subject in which his thoughts were buried, asked the child what he was doing: "I am," replied the child, "making a hole here in the sand." "But for what purpose?" asked St. Augustine. The child replied, "to drain the sea into it." "O," resumed Augustine, "don't be silly." "Silly," said the child, "I am not so silly as you, who are trying to make room for the Blessed Trinity within your little understanding." And so saying the child disappeared! leaving St. Augustine to reflect on the absurdity of a limited mind trying to grasp an infinite object. So we must say of eternity. It is impossible for us to comprehend it. As well might we attempt to get the sea into the

hollow of our hand, as to get an adequate conception of eternity into our minds. O eternity, eternity! What a thought! But eternity in hell, or in heaven, one or other of which is to be our lot, who can think on it without trembling from head to foot!

2. We are further to reflect, that whilst eternity is to last for ever and ever, it is to be without a moment's pause or interruption either in the misery of the damned in hell or the happiness of the blessed in heaven. What a consideration this! And let us apply it first to the damned in hell. In every kind of pain we are acquainted with in this world, there is a relief in thinking, that having attained a certain point of intensity it will begin to abate. The poor sufferer, writhing under the most excruciating torture in the morning, hopes to be better before evening, or, in the evening, he hopes there will be a change before morning; and though his hopes be deferred, he still clings to the consolation of hoping, that sooner or later relief will come, and that at all events his sufferings will not last always. Alas! there is no such door of consolation opened to the damned in hell! Alas! no. Could a damned soul assure herself that at any assignable period of time, however distant, she should be relieved, even for a short time, were it to be after millions and millions of years, hell would be no longer hell to her. What a thought for the unhappy soul! No respite, no pause, ages and ages are to pass on, thy torments are to be the same, without a moment's intermission, without the relief of a single instant. How dreadful! how horrible! &c.

But from the depths of hell let us transport ourselves to the heights of heaven with the same thought, that there is to be no intermission, no pause, even for a moment, in the happiness of the blessed. Here on earth, why is it there is no real happiness? There are several reasons, but a special reason is, that all happiness we are acquainted with has in it the great drawback of being uncertain in its duration, and that sooner or later it is to come to an end.

[Apply this reflection to the rich man, the man of honour, the man, like the rich glutton, clothed in purple and fine linen, and feasting sumptuously every day; and conclude by saying:]

Thus do we see every happiness here below has in it the embittering thought, that it is uncertain and that it is to come to

an end. Not so in heaven: the happiness the blessed enjoy is perfectly assured them to last for ever. O yes! for ever and ever they will continue to be inebriated with the plenty of God's house, and drink of the torrent of His delight.

[Amplify, and end with exclamations.]

How delightful! How enchanting the thought which fills up the soul of every saint in heaven. Nothing can suspend her happiness, &c.; no, not for a single moment through all eternity! O eternity! Eternity in heaven, how transporting the thought!

3. But if we cannot conceive a positive idea of eternity, we can form what is called a negative idea of it: that is, by stretching our thoughts as far as we are capable of stretching them, we still keep in mind, that there is yet farther on a length and breadth, a height and depth of thought, immeasurably above and below, immeasurably beyond the limit we have reached. For example, you come to the sea and you look over its expanse, as far as the eye can reach: you say to yourself I can see only so far, but the sea extends farther on, I don't know how far, beyond the range of my own vision. Now it is somewhat in this way we form the only idea we are capable of forming of eternity. Eternity is a duration spread out before us like the sea, but without bounds or limits. Nevertheless we can see a certain way over its expanse. Now let us apply ourselves to this, as far as our understanding will conduct us. Science teaches us how to calculate the distance of objects far and far beyond our reach. We can calculate the distance of the moon, the planets, the sun. We can say the sun is ninety-five millions of miles away from us. Respecting the fixed stars, it is ascertained that they are much more distant. To give us an idea of their distance, men of science tell us that light travels nearly at the rate of twelve millions of miles every minute; and it would take three years and a-half for light to reach us from the nearest of the fixed stars. These calculations astonish us. But to what does this astonishment conduct us? To the hope, is it, that we may be able to count out the years of eternity? Alas! no; numbers have their limits: space has its limits. But Eternity, O Eternity! thou hast no limits.

Let us add to these thousands upon thousands, those millions upon millions of years, that we have been computing, all the

drops of water composing all the seas and oceans in the world, and let each drop count as a million of years. Let us still add all the atoms in the air, and all the leaves of all the trees in the world, each atom and each leaf counting as a million of years; do these countless millions bring us to the end of eternity! Alas! no. To the middle of eternity? Alas! no. To any distance through eternity? Alas! no. Eternity is still there; it is still the same limitless duration, the same infinity still. How wonderful! How the mind is absorbed, and the imagination bewildered with the thought of eternity! And this eternity is before each one of us! And this eternity we are to spend in hell, or in heaven! In hell, O how frightful the idea! In heaven, O how enchanting the prospect! And who would not labour, during the few years we have to spend here in this fleeting world, to earn for ourselves this glorious eternity?

But we will approach the subject once more, and try to obtain some idea of eternity, by again seeing how far any example we can exhibit to our minds is from furnishing us with an adequate idea of it. You are acquainted with the parable of the rich glutton and Lazarus. Let us refresh our memory by reciting it. (**Here recite the Parable as in** *St. Luke* xvi.) This example is of our Saviour's telling. He places before us two men, who once inhabited this world, as we do now, and who, as our Divine Lord spoke, had passed, as we shall one day pass, "*into the house of eternity.*" (*Eccles.* xii. 5). He points them out to us, one suffering the torments of hell, the other enjoying the happiness of heaven. In his misery, the glutton, the unhappy glutton, asked for a mere drop of water to cool for a moment, for it could be only for a moment, his burning tongue. The favour, inconsiderable though it should seem to be, was refused him. But let us suppose it was promised him after a thousand years. We may well believe, from the earnestness with which he begged it, he should beg the same relief again; and let us suppose it should be granted him every thousand years, see how the account runs on, one drop in a thousand years to cool his burning tongue, two drops in two thousand years, ten drops in ten thousand years, a hundred in a hundred thousand years; and thus let thousands and thousands pass on, and set down one drop of water for every thousand, the time should come, the inconceivably distant period should arrive, when the unhappy man

should have drunk down all the seas and oceans in the world to their lowest depths, to their last drop; yet, O terrible thought! he is still crying out, "*I am tortured in this fire;*" his pains are as fresh, as far from an end, as the day he was consigned to the fiery abyss. And all this time, O glorious thought! Lazarus is in the bosom of Abraham; all this time he is exulting in the happiness of heaven: and his joy is as fresh, and as far from an end, as the day he was carried by angels into his blissful abode. O Eternity! Eternity! But eternity in hell how dreadful, and eternity in heaven how transportingly delightful!

We can pursue our supposition still further. The miserable glutton has now swallowed down all the waters of all the seas and oceans of this earth, at the rate of one drop in every thousand years. Let us further suppose that, at this inconceivably distant period of time, he should begin to shed tears, alas! unavailing tears, and that he should shed one, and only one, in every thousand years; the time should arrive, the inconceivably distant period should come, when his tears, one by one, at a distance of a thousand years between, should not only fill up the seas and oceans again, but drown the universe to the highest star; and, O rich glutton! where art thou now! At the end of thy sufferings? Alas! no. Still thou art tormented in that fire. Still thou wouldst deem it a relief to get one drop of water to cool for a moment thy burning tongue, without any, even the slightest, ray of hope for the future. Eternity is still eternity, and shall be so for ever and ever. And thou, O happy Lazarus, thou art still in the bosom of Abraham; still in the enjoyment of paradise: still inebriated with the plenty of God's house: still drinking of the torrent of God's delight, enjoying the happiness and repose of God Himself; and to enjoy it as long as God shall be God, throughout the countless ages of eternity. O again, how transporting the thought of eternity in heaven! &c.

Conclusion.

What have we been considering? Eternity: and eternity in heaven and eternity in hell! One of these eternities is before us. We are hurrying to it. Which will it be! Alas! "*wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there are who go in thereat.*" (*Matt.* vii. 13). Sinners, are

you mad? Yes, I ask you, are you mad? What is keeping you from the miserable eternity we are considering? The mere thread of your life. And you see the sword of God's justice over your heads to cut that thread. If you had died in your sins, already should you have been condemned to hell for all eternity. If this night your soul be demanded of you, the devil has a place ready for you. Oh! repent. Oh! have recourse to God's mercy; even still He wills not your death, but that you be converted and live. Be then converted, enter that narrow gate, and walk henceforth in that straight path which leadeth to life; join the few that have found it; and your lot will be amongst the saints of God for all eternity. Amen.

PART II.

ON SIN, THE DECALOGUE,

AND THE

PRECEPTS OF THE CHURCH.

PARTICULAR PREFACE

TO

PART II.

The Commandments of God and the Precepts of the Church form the matter of our Second Series of Programmes. The subjects they present are of a mixed character, furnishing at once matter for instruction and exhortation. To treat them in an orderly manner, they are made to consist, after a suitable introduction, of three parts, viz., the motives for what is to be done, or not to be done, under the Commandment or Precept; secondly, an exposition in detail of the duties required, or the wrong-doing to be avoided; and thirdly, the means to be employed to secure the observance of the Commandment or Precept, whether in a preceptive or prohibitory sense.

The first part, consisting of motives, is to be treated in exhortation style, in order to enforce the obligations contained in the Commandment or Precept. The motives are to be found, in the first place, in the Commandment or Precept itself, and may be backed with additional motives from Scripture, tradition, theology, and natural reason. Each motive should conclude with an appeal to conviction or sentiment, in favour of the matter inculcated, and it would be well to sum up briefly for combined effect, before proceeding to the second division, consisting of an exposition of the matter forming the subject of the discourse.

It is of great importance to follow up this exposition in practical detail, in order to point out what is ordered or prohibited by the Commandment or Precept under treatment.

With this view, it is found useful to put forward cases or examples illustrative of the matter requiring explanation. Care, however, should be taken lest these illustrations would come home too much to individuals, as if designed for them, which might be attended with great inconvenience, even so far as to expose the confessional to prejudice. To avoid this indiscretion, the cases should be put hypothetically, or, better still, they might be taken from history, sacred or profane.

Also, it would be advantageous, in these practical details, to put forward the matter, by way of question, in a contradictory sense, in order to present it with greater distinctness and effect in the sense in which it is to be inculcated and understood.

In laying down the means to be employed for the fulfilment of the Commandment or Precept, it will be sufficient to point out three or four such means, besides prayer, which should be recommended in every case. A large enumeration of means would embarrass the memory of the audience.

It would be well to mix up a sentimental reflection occasionally, with the statements and explanations of both the second and third division of the discourse, in order to impart to them a pious savour, as otherwise they would be insipid, and perhaps wearisome to the audience; and as these statements and explanations enter into practical life, there is need of much discretion, delicacy, and tact in putting them forward. If the Preacher has to speak of misconduct, or violations of the Commandment or Precept he is treating, it would be well to give such a form to his observations, as if the things spoken of were to be supposed as merely possible or exceptional, and that the contrary state of things is to be considered as the general rule. Invective, reproach, and vehement denunciations should be sparingly used, as liable to fall foul of private life, embitter personal feelings, and renew wounds and sores by perhaps a censorious application of the Preacher's words, as if intended for particular individuals in his congregation or parish. Nevertheless, in speaking of certain vices, such as drunkenness,

impurity, &c., the language of the Preacher cannot be too strong, and he can, by all means, address the offender in general terms, accosting him even in the second person, according to the rhetorical licence allowed by the figure Apostrophe; as, for instance, "O drunkard," "O impure sinner," "O unhappy parents," &c.

The conclusion should in a general way only refer to the motives, in case they have been already recapitulated at the end of the first part of the discourse. If, however, this has not been done, the omission is to be supplied here, after which a summary review is to be made of the explanations of the second division, as also of the means set forth in the third, and the discourse should close with an earnest exhortation in conformity with the subject.

It is found to be convenient for the Preacher, and very advantageous to the audience, to make the recapitulation of a preceding subject the introduction of a subsequent one, more especially when he is engaged in treating a series of subjects in consecutive order. The matter of the previous subject is thereby refreshed in their minds, and more deeply impressed, whilst persons, who were absent, have the disadvantage, in a great degree, made good by means of these repetitions and recapitulations.

By way of preparation for the treatment of the Commandments it has been deemed suitable to give some few Programmes on Sin, according to the distinctions of Mortal and Venial, and the Seven Capital Sins.

FIRST DISCOURSE

ON MORTAL SIN.

"*They that commit sin and iniquity, are enemies of their own soul.*"—TOBIAS xii. 10.

INTRODUCTION.

Our Catechism teaches us that the greatest misfortune that can happen to us in this world, is to fall into mortal sin. This great lesson we have learned in childhood. The teachings of religion have never allowed us to forget it; and now, as we are here in God's presence, we believe and confess it. Why, then, is it, that with this great truth constantly before our minds, we yield to temptation, and fall so readily into mortal sin? Why is it, that so many souls, after falling into mortal sin, remain in that wretched state? Why is it, that the world is so overrun with sin? Why this strange infatuation among mankind, that we should become our own enemies by committing sin and iniquity? Why all this? The reason is proclaimed to us by God Himself; for, speaking through His prophet, He says, "*With desolation is all the land made desolate, because there is none that considereth in the heart.*" (*Jer.* xii. 11). Here is the cause why sin is so prevalent in the world: men do not reflect, they do not think. Hence arises insensibility, &c., and therefore men sin, and, as holy Job says, "*Swallow down iniquity like water.*" (*Job* xv. 16). How important is it, therefore, to bring before our minds the consideration of sin, that we may be penetrated with the great truth announced in the text, "They that commit sin," &c.

[Invite attention and invoke a blessing.]

BODY OF THE SUBJECT.

1. *What sin is or the essential motive of sin.* Sin is an essential evil, or, more properly speaking, the only evil in the world. Other things are accounted evils.

Here detail a variety of things considered as evils, such as sickness, poverty, &c.; and assert, that these things are not real evils, that

they may be turned into blessings that good may be derived from them, by making them the occasions of practising virtue of various kinds, such as patience, penance, &c.; after which lay down, that there are many saints in heaven on account of the proper use they made of the evils, or so-called evils, enumerated.

Observe, on the contrary, that sin is an essential evil, without any mixture of good, from which no good can be drawn; whence the wise man, after saying, "*we wearied ourselves in the way of iniquity*," asks the question, "*what hath pride profited us? or what advantage hath the boasting of riches brought us?*" (*Wisd.* v. 8). He then immediately adds, "*Such things as these the sinners said in hell.*" (*Wisd.* v. 14).

Apply the passage by appealing to various classes of sinners, asking them consecutively what advantage they have derived from their sins . . . Further interrogate souls in hell in the same way; and infer that sin is not only an evil, but the only evil, properly speaking, in the world. Repeat text for conclusion of point.

2. The evil of sin consists in its being opposed to the Supreme Good, who is God. Ask, is not sin any thought, word, or act contrary to the law of God, and therefore opposed to Him? Add, it is not simply opposed to Him, but it involves a contempt of God by the sinner preferring sin to the Divine Majesty.

Show this by representing the sinner, when tempted, balancing, between God, on the one side, and sin, on the other, and turning his back upon God, to prefer sin and Satan. Illustrate this point by the example of Judas deliberating between his Divine Master, on the one side, and thirty pieces of silver on the other. Here infer, with the universal teaching of the Church, that sin is an infinite evil, because of the infinite Majesty of God, Whom it assails, Whom the sinner despises and outrages by committing sin.

Conclude this point by some sensational appeals.

3. *The punishments with which God punishes sin. First punishment*—Expulsion of rebel angels from heaven. Describe what the angels were before their fall, and what after, quoting St. Peter, 2nd Epistle, ii. 4. Reflect that their sin was only one, and a sin of thought merely, without any previous example of God's vengeance, and without a moment's time for repentance. Contrast our case with theirs in all these particulars.

Second punishment—Fall of our first parents. Describe their happy state previous to and their miserable state after, their fall with all the evils of soul and body, of time and eternity, that ensued.

Third punishment—The Passion of our Divine Lord. To bring out this point, observe, that all things are possible to God, and that by the power of His will He created the entire universe. "*He spoke*,"

says the Psalmist, "*and they were made: He commanded, and they were created.*" (*Ps.* xxxii. 9). But not so with respect to sin. Here appeal to the crucifix, going through a rapid recital of the leading points of the Passion, and infer how dreadful sin must be to have required a God-man to lay down His life and spill His blood for its atonement.

Fourth punishment—Hell. Observe, there was no hell before sin, that sin is the cause of hell, &c., &c. Make a rapid summary of the sufferings of the damned, after which represent the sinner in this life suspended over the gulf of hell by the mere thread of life, whilst the arm of God's justice is uplifted to cut that thread.

Conclusion.

Conclude by a vigorous recapitulation, with an exhortation to repentance.

Consult Bourdaloue's "Spiritual Retreat," "Challoner's Meditations," and "Sinner's Guide."

SECOND DISCOURSE

ON MORTAL SIN.

"*Flee from sins as from the face of a serpent; for, if thou comest near them, they will take hold of thee. The teeth thereof are the teeth of a lion, killing the souls of men.*"—Eccl. xxi. 2, 3.

Introduction.

We have a natural dread of what may do us harm. This comes from the instinct of self-preservation, the strongest feeling we have within us: however, we are so much occupied with what concerns our temporal life, the life of these mortal bodies, that we are more alive to what may injure them or endanger their life than we are for our immortal souls, though infinitely more precious than our bodies. The Holy Ghost, therefore, taking advantage of our sensitiveness regarding our mortal life, desires us to have the same dread of what may injure our spiritual life; and, therefore, bringing before us the thought of a serpent, a venomous reptile, whose bite is certain death. He would have us avoid sin, as we would shun that reptile; and as we

would shrink back at the very sight of it, so likewise should we recoil from sin, the moment that the bare thought of it comes before our minds. Quote text here again.

Taking, therefore, the advice of the Holy Ghost, we shall endeavour to penetrate our souls with a holy horror of sin, asking of Him, with this view, to assist us by His holy grace.

A short petition addressed to the Holy Ghost.

N.B.—Instead of this introduction, the points of previous discourse may be used by presenting a brief recapitulation of them.

BODY OF THE SUBJECT.

1. *Mortal sin is so called, because it kills the soul.* Explain how, and proceed to state, that the death of the body may be caused in two ways, either naturally, as the result of ordinary sickness, or violently by murder; and murder may be committed by the hands of another, or by one's own. In any form, death is dreadful, and our entire nature endeavours to resist it, but murder is more dreadful than natural death, and beyond all comparison self-murder is the most shocking of all deaths.

Here bring your audience to the spectacle of a man who has just committed suicide; and inspecting the body all over, especially the fatal wound, excite their horror at the sight; after which make the comparison of a person guilty of mortal sin, showing how he has deprived his soul of spiritual life, has been guilty of suicide with regard to it, and a suicide so much more dreadful than that of the body, as the life of the soul is more precious than that of the body.

2. *Death deprives a dead man of everything belonging to his temporal life.*

Summon your audience once more to the spectacle of a dead man who has committed suicide, and say, he may have been a man in high station, a king, a prince, &c. What now is his dignity and rank? He may have been voluptuous, revelling in sensual pleasures: what now of him? Go into detail in each of these divisions and quote 1 *Tim.* vi. 7. Make comparison with respect to the soul, by showing how the sinner by one mortal sin deprives his soul of all other spiritual treasures. To draw out this, show, that if he had lived a long life in the most fervent practices of religion, if he had led the life of the most rigid anchorite, &c., and if laden with the merits thus earned for himself, he had acquired a right to a high place in heaven with confessors and martyrs, &c., and if he had committed but one mortal sin, all his merits are lost, as the ship is buried in the sea by being wrecked.

Here explain the doctrine of reviviscence of merits to guard

against error, adding, however, that the general truth yet remains, that so long as the sinner remains in mortal sin, all his merits are lost for the time, and if he die in that state, they are lost for all eternity.

3. *Death deprives the dead man of all vital power.*

Again, summon your audience into the presence of a corpse, and depict the state of utter helplessness in which it lies in death: eyes that see not, ears that hear not, and feet that move not, and the entire body a helpless mass of matter, &c. Compare the soul in the death of sin, showing how it can do nothing worthy of reward in heaven; and proceed to detail a variety of great acts of virtue, concluding by insisting, that they are of no value for eternal life, being dead words, whereas a mere cup of cold water given in a state of grace would have its reward. (Quote 1 *Cor.* xiii. 1, 2, 3).

N.B.—Explain, to prevent error, that good works done in a state of sin are not useless, but that still these works performed by a sinner in the state of sin, can never be accounted amongst the works meriting reward in heaven. Here remonstrate against the sinner remaining in a state of sin, &c.

4. *The decomposition of a dead body.*

Bring your audience once more into the presence of a dead body, and describe it as it grows livid, and changes colour, showing already signs of putrefaction, with an offensive smell issuing from it, on account of which it becomes necessary to remove it, and bury it in the earth, that it may not infect the air, and spread abroad the odour of pestilence and death. Proceed further to describe the condition after a few days in the grave. (Quote *Job* xvii. 14). Make the application to the soul, by stating her condition to be more dreadful in sin. This show by contrasting what it was when in grace with what it now is in a state of sin, taking the example of Lucifer, as he was, and what he became, keeping before the audience the great fact, that sin has been the cause of this terrible transformation, and operates the same fearful change in the soul of every man as he falls into mortal sin. Recite that it has been given to some saints to have visions of damned souls, and they were so horror-stricken at the sight, that they declared they would rather walk on burning coals till the day of judgment than witness such a spectacle again. Appeal to the sinner, saying: Sinner, if you could see the state of your unhappy soul, the fearful spectacle you have made of it by sin, &c., you would cry out for mercy, and return to your offended Creator, &c.

Conclusion.

Sum up briefly, but forcibly, the four points, and exhort sinners to repentance.

Consult Bourdaloue's "Retreat;" and Theology on Sin, Human Acts, Grace, and Merit.

VENIAL SIN.

"*He that is faithful in that which is least, is faithful also in that which is greater; and he that is unjust in that which is little, is unjust also in that which is greater.*"—LUKE xvi. 10.

INTRODUCTION.

In the judgments we form of things we often consider them not as they are in themselves, but as they are in comparison with other things. We judge a thing, great or small, not because we consider it great or small in itself, but because, comparing it with something else, we judge it so in comparison. This mode of thinking and judging leads us into many mistakes, more especially in matters concerning our soul and salvation. Venial sin is a remarkable example. We compare it with mortal sin, and we say it does not kill the soul, as does mortal sin; it does not deserve hell, as does mortal sin; and, from this comparison, we allow ourselves to be led erroneously to the conclusion, that venial sin is a small matter, and that we have no great reason to be much concerned about it. Alas! what a fatal error! an error which has deceived, and is deceiving, innumerable souls, taking them away from the narrow path leading to everlasting life, and beguiling them into the broad road that ends in everlasting death.

How important, therefore, that we should guard against an error so disastrous; and in order to do so, we will, in the name of God, bestow some reflections in this address on the subject of venial sin, in order that, with God's grace, we may conceive a just notion of it, and thereby be careful to avoid it.

[A short invocation.]

If the subject is to form one of the series, instead of the foregoing introduction, you may recapitulate the chief points of the preceding discourse.

BODY OF THE SUBJECT.

1. Refute the idea that venial sin is a small matter, by showing, first, that it is an offence against God, and therefore a greater evil than any temporal calamity. Here mention—1st, Some of the greatest temporal calamities, such as loss of reputation, loss of property, sickness, &c., and insist, that to offend God by the least sin is incom-

parably greater than any one of these calamities, or than all of them put together. 2ndly, That God can never sanction or approve of the least sin for any conceivable reason whatever. Here suppose the saving of one's life, the averting of wars, famines, &c., the conversion of a nation of idolaters, the preventing of heresies and schisms, &c.; to avert any, or all of these evils, to procure any of these advantages, it will never be lawful to tell even a venial lie, for God could never allow it by any sanction, and did He do so, He should cease to be God; and, sooner than do so, He would let all these evils come, and all these advantages be lost. 3rdly, That it is an article of our faith as Christians, that we cannot enter the kingdom of heaven with a single venial sin upon our souls. The Apostle says expressly, that nothing defiled shall enter that kingdom of holiness. (*Apoc.* xxi. 27).

However just we may otherwise be, and predestined for glory, and with treasures of merit stored up for our reward, nevertheless, our soul, if it depart this life, bearing with it the stain of only one venial sin, is shut out from heaven, and must go into the dungeons of purgatory, &c. Oh! look down into these regions of misery! Hear the lamentations of the poor sufferers there, and say if venial sin, venial though it is, can be accounted a small matter! **Here deplore** the illusion and blindness of mankind, and **quote** again the words of our Lord in the text.

2. **State some examples** of the punishment of venial sin even in this world, such as that of Moses and Aaron (*Numb.* xx.); of Mary, the sister of Moses (*Numb.* xii.); of the man gathering sticks on the Sabbath day (*Numb.* xv.); of David (2 *Kings* xxiv.); of Oza (2 *Kings* vi.); Lot's wife (*Gen.* xix.)

In these examples **recite the fact**, with circumstances, **observing** it was only a venial sin in each case, and **showing** the severe punishment inflicted upon the offenders.

Apply these examples by observing how the world abounds with evils and calamities, public and private, affecting families and individuals, and say, if we could lift up the veil which conceals from our view the hidden judgments of God, we should discover that many of these evils and calamities are the punishment of venial sin. **Exhort** to a dread and detestation of it.

3. *The consequences of venial sin.*

It leads to mortal sin, as sickness leads to death. (**Quote** *Eccl.* xix. 1). **Point out** the alarm we are thrown into by sickness: we are afraid it may bring on death, and we do everything to have ourselves cured. **Apply** the comparison, and **proceed** to show in what the danger consists of being led by venial into mortal sin. 1st, They are only separated by a line or point of

more or less, and that line or point is imperceptible to us. Can we therefore flatter ourselves that we shall approach that line or point, and not overstep it? How would we not shudder if we saw a man walking on the edge of a precipice, where there was a fatal spot, which he did not know, and on which, if he placed his foot, he should be hurled to the bottom. **Apply the comparison, showing** how, judging of things according to our self-love, and the desires of our hearts, we permit ourselves to be imposed upon, mistaking sins to be venial, which are mortal, and thereby precipitating ourselves blindly into the pit of mortal sin. Again, even though we can see the line of separation, how can we assure ourselves, that we shall be masters of ourselves, so as not to be drawn across it by the temptation of the moment? Do we not know, that in such circumstances we stand in need of very special graces? and is it not certain that a very ordinary chastisement of God is to withhold His graces on account of venial sin? Thus venial sin leads us to mortal sin, as sickness leads to death.

[**Exhortation** to inspire fear, &c.]

4. **Insist** on the importance of having before our minds the foregoing considerations, on account of the facility with which we allow ourselves to fall into venial sin. This facility is pointed out to us in various parts of Scripture. St. James iii.: "*We all offend in many things, and if any man offend not in word, he is a perfect man;*" and St. John: "*If he say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.*" (*Epist.* i. 8). What testimony against us! But, alas! we deceive ourselves and seek excuse in our self-love. We say we did not know it. But why? Was it not because we allowed ourselves to forget our duties? Was it not because we neglected to be instructed in them? Or was it not because we did not wish to be told of our faults, and through presumption would be our own guides in everything, and yet excuse ourselves by saying that we did not know it.

Again, we say that we did not advert. But why did we not advert? Because we allow ourselves to live on in distraction of mind, and give ourselves up to our humours, which keep us in a state of dissipation; we keep no guard upon our tongue: we allow ourselves to be betrayed by the rashness of our judgments, and the malignity of our suspicions, and yet we vainly say we did not think, we did not advert.

Again we apologise, and say human nature is weak. Nevertheless how many sins could we avoid by keeping ourselves under restraint, and doing some violence to our inclinations according to the words of our Saviour, "*If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me*" (*Luke* ix. 23); also, "*The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent bear it away,*" *&c.* (*Matt.* xi. 12).

If we judge ourselves impartially, throwing aside these deceitful excuses, what reason have we to exclaim with the Royal Psalmist, "*My sins are more numerous than the hairs of my head*" (*Ps.* xxxix. 13.)

[**Exhort** *to contrition.*]

5. *Remedies.* 1st, To retain a great tenderness of conscience, having a dread of everything, however small it may be, the Holy Ghost exhorting us to abstain even from every appearance of sin. **Comparison** of the eye which cannot bear the smallest grain of dust: such should be the conscience of a Christian. 2ndly, To be always on the watch, knowing that the devil is always on the watch (1 *Peter* v. 8). "*Brethren, be sober and watch; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, goeth about seeking whom he may devour.*" 3rdly, To retain a constant spirit of penance, and to have certain penitential practices, such as frequent acts of contrition, saying, "*God be merciful to me a sinner;*" making short acts of the love of God, saying, "O my God," &c.; thinking of our venial sins, as we take holy water saying, "*Wash me yet more from my iniquities, and cleanse me from my sins,*" *&c.*

CONCLUSION.

Recapitulate briefly the points, and exhort to sorrow for the past, and resolution for the future, ending with the words of the text.

Consult Bourdaloue's "Spiritual Retreat;" "Challoner's Meditations."

THE SEVEN CAPITAL SINS.

MODE OF TREATMENT APPLICABLE TO EACH.

1. An appropriate text for each, after which refer to preceding subject, recapitulating the three points by a mere recital, without entering into them anew; then state the subject going to be treated, and having invited attention, invoke a blessing.

2. The body of each subject to consist of the three points set forth in "*the simple and practical method*," namely—1st, motives; 2ndly, in what the subject consists; and 3rdly, the means for the purpose in view, as comprised in the three words, 1 *cur*, 2 *in quo*, 3 *quomodo*.

3. The motives to be taken from Scripture, with a few words of comment on the text quoted, according as it may seem necessary or useful. Add some Scripture fact by way of illustration, and appeal to the special suffering in the passion of our Divine Lord endured by Him to make atonement for the vice in question. This first point to close with an appeal to feeling, for the purpose of exciting hatred of the vice.

4. The second point, in unfolding the vice, is not only to define or describe it, but also to mention that it consists in such and such acts, putting the acts into cases for illustration, saying: "For instance, a person does so and so." The point to close by inviting the audience to examine themselves, and see if they be guilty of the vice in any of the foregoing particulars.

5. The third point to commence by a word or two of exhortation to listen to the means for overcoming the vice. The means to be laid down categorically, with a word at the end of each, inviting the audience to the adoption of it. The means, *inter alia*, to include the practice of the opposite virtue.

6. The conclusion to recall the points, and exhort to a detestation of the vice, employing the motives in a summary way, to excite this sentiment, with a resolution for the future.

7. The series to be introduced by observing that, mortal and venial sin were treated in general terms, but that it is not enough to hate sin in general, and to have a general disposition of mind to avoid it, but that we must hate it in the various forms in which we may be tempted to commit it. Hence the necessity of entering into detail, and treating of sin according

to the different heads under which it is distinguished and classified. Now, these heads are seven in number, and, because being heads, they are called the Seven Capital Sins. Theologically speaking, it would be more correct to call them vices, than sins, vice being a depraved habit, or disposition of mind, which each of the Seven Capital Sins is, and not a particular thought, word, or deed, in which an offence against the law of God may be committed, and which presents the correct idea of sin However, say you will conform with the popular mode of expression, and adopt the words of the Catechism in designating these vices, as the Seven Capital Sins. They are as follows: Pride, &c. Behold the sources from which all our sins take their origin! Oh! if we could only dry up these sources within us, or if we could stem the torrents of iniquity they incessantly send forth, unless we resist them, what a happiness! &c.

We shall, therefore, enter with all earnestness, in God's holy name, upon the consideration of these several Capital Sins, begging of Him Who is the God of all holiness, and in Whose eyes every sin is an abomination, that He will aid us by His grace, &c. After which, state that Pride being the first of the Seven Capital Sins, it is to be the subject of your present discourse.

8. Luxury to be omitted in the series. After Covetousness, which you will recapitulate in the usual way, you will say: it would be according to the order of the instructions in which you are engaged, to treat next in order the vice of Luxury or Lust, but that you will, for the present, pass it over, reserving it for its proper place amongst the Commandments of God, and that you will proceed to the subject next following, namely, the sin of Anger.

[Then a few words to invite attention, and a short invocation.]

Consult Theology "De Vitiis in Specie;" also Bishop Hay's 'Devout Christian," chap. xx.; Guillet's "Projets d'Instructions," lxix., and following instructions; "Challoner's Meditations," Oct. 8th, and following days.

ON THE OBSERVANCE
OF THE
COMMANDMENTS OF GOD IN GENERAL.

"*If thou wilt enter into life, keep the Commandments.*"—MATT. xix. 17

INTRODUCTION.

Relate briefly the passage to which the text refers, and observe, that, like the young man spoken of, every one is naturally desirous of happiness, and therefore we are all to take as addressed to ourselves the words: "*If thou wilt enter into life,*" *&c.* Proceed to say, that the Commandments of God should be our constant study, in order to regulate our lives according to them, adding that, proposing to treat of these Divine precepts in a series of instructions, it will be important beforehand to make some reflections in a general sense on our obligation to observe them.

[**Invite** the attention of your audience, and **invoke** the Divine blessing.]

BODY OF THE SUBJECT.

Motives for observing God's Commandments.

First motive. **Repeat the text, and say:** Our *first motive* for observing the Commandments of God results from our relations to Him, as our Creator and Sovereign Lord. **Develop these two points, showing** His claims to the service of our entire being, and **arguing,** that as the sovereigns of this world have a right to rule their subjects, and issue laws for their observance, how much more does this right belong to God. (**Quote** *Deut.* xxxii. 18; *Job* x. 10; *Jer.* xviii. 6).

[**Appeal** according to the motive.]

Second motive. **Repeat text again and say:** Our *second motive* for observing God's Commandments, is presented by His infinite goodness to us, and the obligation of gratitude on our part arising therefrom.

Quote 1 *Cor.* iv. 7, and **enumerate** the chief benefits in the order of nature and grace we have received and constantly receive from God. **Complain** and lament how ungrateful man is in return for these benefits. (**Quote** *Isai.* 1, 2, 3; *Mal.* i. 6; *Jer.* ii. 12).

Third motive. **Repeat again your text and state:** The *third motive* for observing God's Commandments, is that our salvation depends on our doing so. (**Quote** *Matt.* xxv. 11; *ibid.* vii. 21; iii. 10; v. 19, &c.; *Deut.* xxx. 15, 16, 19).

Fourth motive. The solemn and terrific manner in which He gave His Commandments. **Narrate** the chief circumstances (*Exod.* xix., xx.), and observe, that these terrible manifestations were for all times to come, and should serve to enforce the Commandments on mankind at the present day, as much as when He delivered them to Moses. **Lament**, therefore, the insensibility of mankind in making light of the lightnings and thunders, in the midst of which God Almighty gave these Commandments to mankind.

2. *In what manner are the Commandments of God to be observed?*

1st. *With exactness:* observing them all, the lesser as well as the greater. (*James* ii. 10; *Deut.* i. 18: *Matt.* v. 19).

2ndly, *With fervour:* taking them to heart with the desire of pleasing God, and fulfilling His Divine will in accomplishing them. (*Ps.* cxviii. 4, 32, 127; 2 *Mach.* i. 3; *John* iv. 34; v. 30; vi. 38, &c., &c.)

3rdly. *In a state of grace.* **Observe**, that even in a state of mortal sin one is still bound to observe the Commandments, and the acts he performs in their observance are good in the sight of God, and conducive to the sinner's reconciliation with God. Nevertheless, to earn reward for the world to come, we must be in a state of grace.

Point out the distinction between acts morally and supernaturally good, and acts that are meritorious of reward hereafter; after doing which, **re-affirm** the condition of being in a state of grace.

3. *The means of observing the Commandments.*

First means: the Divine assistance (*John* xv. 4); (2 *Cor.* iii. 5). **Observe**, that this assistance is always granted us, so that God never allows us to be tempted beyond our strength. (1 *Cor.* x. 13). Hence we should constantly beg of God the grace to observe His holy Commandments.

Second means: good will on our part, or our co-operation. (*Ps.* cxviii. 106).

Third means: frequent consideration of the Commandments, and comparing our lives with them. (*Deut.* vi. 6, *et seq.*; *Ps.* cxviii. 47).

Inculcate the duty of parents to teach their children the Commandments as soon as they are able to learn them, and recommend the recital of them at family night prayers.

Conclusion.

Recapitulate, exhort, and end by placing forcibly before the audience, that if they live in the observance of God's Commandments, heaven is open to them with its never-ending happiness on leaving this world; but that if they neglect them, their departure out of this life will be their entrance into hell, to suffer amongst devils and damned souls for all eternity.

Consult "Challoner's Meditations," Guillet's "Projets d'Instructions," xxxviii. Inst.; Bishop Hay's "Devout Christian," vol. i., chap. ii.

FIRST DISCOURSE ON THE

FIRST COMMANDMENT OF GOD.

ON FAITH.

"*I am the Lord thy God . . . . Thou shalt not have strange gods before Me.*"—Exod. xx. 2, 3.

Introduction.

Refer to previous announcement of a series of Instructions on the Ten Commandments of God, and observe, that, as an introduction to the series, the last discourse treated of the Commandments in general, setting forth, in the first place, the motives for observing them, in the second place, in what their proper observance consists, and finally the means necessary for the proper observance of them; after which a few words to express a hope that so important a subject has made a deep and lasting impression; and proceed to say, that you now enter on the Commandments in detail, and that of course you begin with the first, observing, with the Catechism of the Council of Trent, that this Commandment is the first, not only by being

so in order, but still more by its being the greatest of all the Commandments. **Quote** Catechism, Part iii. ch. xiv., **noticing** that this teaching of the Council is in accordance with the words of our Divine Lord (*Matt.* xxii. 38, which **quote**); and **go on to say**, that the Almighty in proclaiming Himself to be OUR LORD AND OUR GOD, in the first Commandment, prescribes thereby, that we are to act towards him as OUR LORD AND OUR GOD, that is that we are to render to Him the service He has a right to in virtue of these titles, or, in other words, that we are to pay Him the tribute of supreme homage, that is, the homage of adoration, which, according to St. Augustine and all other Divines, we pay Him by Faith, Hope, Charity, and Religion.

Hence infer that the few words of your text, "*I am the Lord thy God, thou shalt not have strange gods before me*," present at once four distinct subjects, namely, Faith, Hope, Charity, and Religion; and proceed to announce, that Faith, as being first in order, will be the present subject, in treating which you will consider, in the *first place*, the necessity and advantages of Faith, *secondly*, what Faith is, and, *in the third place*, how Faith is acquired, preserved, and exercised.

[A few words to invite attention, with a short invocation.]

BODY OF THE SUBJECT.

1. *The necessity and advantages of Faith; and first its necessity.*

In proof of the necessity of Faith (**quote** *Mark* xvi. 14; *John* vi. 40; *John* viii. 24; 1 *Cor.* i. 21; *Heb.* x. 38, xi. 6; **explaining**, in each case, that the word *to believe* is the same as having Faith, or acting according to Faith, and proceed to lay down the doctrine of the Council of Trent, teaching, that Faith is "*the beginning of salvation, the foundation and root of all justification* (Sess. vi., chap. vii.), and that "*without Faith no one has ever been justified.* *Ibid.* chap. vii.) **Explain** what justification is; and *say* that as a tree cannot bring forth fruit without being rooted in the ground, and as a house cannot stand without a foundation, so there can be no fruits of justification, nor even justification itself, without Faith.

In proof of the advantages of Faith, **quote** various passages from *Heb.* xi., *Matt.* ix. 2, xv. 28, viii. 10, ix. 29: **adding** that it is Faith that distinguishes the Christian from the pagan, the true children of the Church from the infidel and the heretic,

and that in its power and efficacy it has conquered the world. (*Heb.* xi. 33; 1 *John* v. 4).

[N.B.—These proofs of the necessity and advantages of Faith to be interspersed with sentimental words here and there, such as words of admiration, thanksgiving, petition, &c., as also compassion for heretics and infidels.]

2. *What Faith is.* **Define** it, and **explain** the terms of the definition, **pointing out** distinctly the object of Faith, the motive of Faith, and the certainty of Faith, **stating** the distinction of habitual and actual Faith, of explicit and implicit Faith, of internal Faith and the external profession of it, **giving in each case the necessary explanations.** After which **insist** first, on the necessity of Faith, at least of internal Faith, in an adult in mortal sin, to obtain forgiveness; secondly, the obligation of making Acts of Faith sometimes; thirdly, the necessity of believing explicitly, and therefore of knowing, certain articles of Faith, namely the principal mysteries.

[Here **explain** this as necessary, *necessitate medii*, for adults, and **inculcate** the obligation of parents to have their children taught these mysteries, as soon as they come to the use of reason.]

Fourthly, the obligation sometimes of making open profession of our Faith, **stating** the occasions that may occur for this obligation, and **laying down**, that it can never be lawful, on any account, to deny outwardly by word or act the true Faith.

3. *How Faith is acquired, preserved and exercised. First, how it is acquired.* **To show this, explain** that Faith is a supernatural virtue (**explain** the term), that it is infused into the soul by the grace of Baptism, and takes effect in the infant, as he comes to the use of reason, by the actual belief he becomes capable then of eliciting in the truths of Faith.

[Illustrate this by fuel of any kind, which has in itself the property of producing fire, which property, however, remains concealed till a torch, or something of the kind, is applied. So, likewise, the habit of Faith infused into the soul of the infant, as he is baptised, remains concealed, till it is called into activity by the torch of Faith being applied to it, in the truths of Faith being proposed to its mind.]

With regard to those who have not been baptised in infancy, and have grown up in heresy or infidelity, or, who may have fallen away from the true Faith, the mercy of God is always ready to come to their aid, since "*He wishes all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth.* (1 *Tim.* ii. 4).

How, in the second place, we are to preserve our Faith. We must avoid all occasions to the contrary, such as reading heretical and infidel books, taking part in the religious worship or practices of heretics. We must also avoid all places and systems of education dangerous to Faith.

As to the exercise of our Faith. This we do by frequent Acts of Faith, by reading good books, and more especially, by living according to Faith, so that the principles and motives by which we are governed in all we undertake or do, be in accordance with our Faith, as also by open profession of it, as occasion may require (quoting *Luke* xii. 8, 9).

Conclusion.

Conclude with words of thanksgiving for the gift of the true Faith, and exhort to give up our lives rather than surrender a particle of our Faith.

Consult Theology on the Virtue of Faith; Council of Trent, and Catechism of the Council; and Bishop Hay on the Commandments of God.

SECOND DISCOURSE ON

THE FIRST COMMANDMENT OF GOD

ON HOPE.

"*We are saved by hope.*"—Rom. viii. 24.

Introduction.

[Refer to previous instruction, with a brief recapitulation of the heads, and announce present subject, after which bespeak attention and invoke a blessing.]

Body of the Subject.

1. Define Hope, reserving the explanation of the terms, and proceed to state *the grounds or motives of Hope*, as follows:—

1st. God's Omnipotence, shown from the creation, conservation, and government of the universe.

2ndly. His infinite goodness and mercy, which incline Him to look with compassion upon our wants and miseries, and bestow His mercies and favours upon us. (Quote some appropriate and striking texts from "*Concordance*," under titles "*Misereor*" and *Misericordia*.") Show His mercies especially to sinners. (Quote two or three texts to this purpose, and examples in the *Gospel*.) His mercy and goodness as to our corporal and temporal necessities, shown from the miraculous cures related in the Gospel. (*Mark* vi. 55, 56).

3rdly. The promises of eternal life, and the means of obtaining it, so distinctly and repeatedly made by God in several parts of the Sacred Scripture. (Quote some of them).

4thly. Not only are we permitted, but we are commanded, to hope in God, and as we should offend against His Divine veracity in refusing to believe Him, so in refusing to hope in Him would we offend against His Divine power, goodness, and mercy, as also His fidelity to His promises.

2. *In what does Hope consist?*

Repeat definition and explain the terms *Virtue*, *Supernatural*, *we hope, eternal life, and the graces necessary for obtaining it.* This is the primary object of our hope, allowing us, however, to hope also for temporal blessings, as secondary objects, subordinate to the former.

3. *Conditions of Hope.*

1st. *Firm*, excluding all doubt as to the power, goodness, and mercy of God, and merits of our Redeemer, consequently leaving no ground of despair. (Explain *Despair*.)

2ndly. *Humble*, as regards ourselves. We can never know, except by special revelation, if we be worthy of love or hatred, and we are required to work out our salvation in fear and trembling to the end, that we must guard against presumption. (Explain *Presumption*).

N.B.—Under each of the above motives elicit sentiments of Admiration, Thanksgiving, Congratulation, Consolation, &c.

4. *Means of exercising and strengthening our Hope.*—1st, Prayer; 2ndly, frequent Acts of Hope, especially in all our difficulties, trials, and miseries.

Conclusion.

Conclude with a cursory review of the motives, thanking and praising God for His goodness, &c.

Consult Theology on the Decalogue ; the Council of Trent, and Catechism of the Council ; also Bishop Hay on the Commandments of God.

THIRD DISCOURSE ON

THE FIRST COMMANDMENT OF GOD.

ON CHARITY.

"*And now there remain Faith, Hope, Charity, these three; but the greater of these is Charity.*"—1. COR. xiii. 13.

INTRODUCTION.

[Refer to the preceding instructions, and briefly **recapitulate** the last. **Announce** the present subject, engage attention, invoke a blessing.]

BODY OF THE SUBJECT.

1. **Define** Charity in both branches, and **state** that you will confine yourself to the love of God in the present discourse, after which proceed to the following considerations: 1st, We are bound to love God on account of His infinite perfections, which render Him sovereignly amiable; comparison of a man eminently virtuous (**enumerate various virtues**): he is admired, esteemed, and loved by every one. **Apply** the comparison to God, possessing all perfections in the most perfect manner. 2ndly, We are commanded to love God (**various texts**); after which **reflect** how amiable it is, on the part of God, to admit us to love Him. **Observe** how the great ones on earth make laws to enforce the *obedience*, but not the *love*, of their subjects. Whence St. Augustine: "What! am I to love thee, O Lord! because Thou dost order me to love Thee, and because Thou wouldst be angry with me, and threatenest to punish me should I not love Thee? Is it not a great misery in itself that I should not love thee?" (*Conf. lib.* 1, *l.* 5, *No.* 5). 3rdly. The excellency of the love of God. **Quote text**, and also *Matt.* xxii. 37, 38: "*Jesus said to him: Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole mind. This is the greatest and the first commandment.*" 4thly, His love of us challenging a return of love (1 *John* iv. 10-19: "*In this is charity; not as though we had loved God, but because He hath first loved us, and sent His Son to be a propitiation for our sins. Let us therefore love God, because God hath first loved us.*"

2. *Explanation of the terms of the Precept.*—Distinguish *habitual* and *actual*, also pure charity, or the charity of *benevolence*, and the charity of *concupiscence*, which latter has in view our own interests.

3. *Means of acquiring and maintaining the love of God.*—1st, The sinner to seek reconciliation with his God by penance; 2ndly, Those in a state of grace to esteem charity above everything else. (Quote *Rom.* viii. 35, 38, 39), "*Who then shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation? or distress? or famine? or nakedness? or danger? or persecution? or the sword? For I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor might, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord;*" 3rdly, Frequent Acts of Charity by pious ejaculations and aspirations, such as "*The God of my heart and my portion for ever;*" "*My God and my all;*" "*Too late have I known Thee, too late have I loved Thee!*"

Conclusion.

Conclude by an exhortation according to the *considerations* as above.

Consult Theology on the Decalogue, Bishop Hay on the First Commandment, also Challoner on the love of God, &c.

N.B.—Texts enforcing the love of God to be found in the "Concordance," under the title "*diligo.*"

FOURTH DISCOURSE ON
THE FIRST COMMANDMENT OF GOD.

ON RELIGION.

"*Bring to the Lord glory and honour; bring to the Lord glory to His name: adore ye the Lord in His holy court.*"—Ps. xxviii. 2.

Introduction.

The first of the Ten Commandments relates to the honour due to God. This honour we render him by Faith, Hope, Charity, and Religion. Already we have treated of the virtues

of Faith, Hope and Charity, and we are to be engaged this evening in considering the remaining virtue of Religion.

A word or two on the importance of the subject; after which observe, that the word Religion is used in different senses; sometimes to express the summary of the various doctrines and duties belonging to the worship of God, and sometimes the worship itself due to God. In the present instruction, however, we are to speak of Religion as a virtue, the special office of which is to dispose and incline us to render due worship to the Almighty.

[Some words to engage attention, and invoke a blessing.]

BODY OF THE SUBJECT.

1. *First point Motives for tendering to God the duties of Religion.*

First motive. Because God, as He is our first Beginning, is also our last End (*Apoc.* xxi. 6). Go on to state, that God took us out of nothing and gave us a being, not to eat and drink and die, like the beast of the field. In creating us, He gave us a soul, the properties of which proclaim that we have a destiny above and beyond this material world, to know God, to love Him, to serve and honour Him, that is, to render Him the homage of Religion here upon earth, that we may possess Him and enjoy Him in heaven.

Second motive. All the works of creation invite us to praise and glorify the Almighty. Quote *Ps.* xviii. 2, and observe, that there is not a creature of God, animate or inanimate, that does not discover to us some of the perfections of its Creator. But this material world is, as the instrument, silent and without sound, till the artist calls forth its power. Thus is man to give a voice to all creatures here below, and make them sound forth the praises of the Most High. Hence Daniel and his companions called upon all creatures on earth, as well as in heaven, to praise and glorify God, in chanting their "*Benedicite.*" Hence David (*Ps.* cxlviii., cxlix., cl.) invites all creatures to praise God.

Thus we see that God created all things for His own glory, that He is the Beginning and the End of all things, and therefore all things are to contribute to His glory, and that it is the object of Religion to engage man in rendering to God all honour and glory, according to the words of St. Paul: "*To the King of ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.*" (1 *Tim.* i. 17).

Third motive. In performing the offices of Religion, that is, in honouring God with due honour, we associate ourselves with the angels and blessed spirits in heaven in the occupation which unceasingly employs them (**Quote** *Daniel* vii. 10; *Apoc.* v. 8, 13; vii. 11, 12). Now, we have a soul within us, a spirit like to those heavenly spirits (**Quote** *Ps.* viii. 6). **Infer therefore** how honourable for us to be united with the choirs of angels in their heavenly occupation of praising, blessing, and glorifying God. Therefore it is that we say in the Preface of the Mass: "*Cum quibus et nostras voces,*" *&c.*

[**Express** it in English after having said it in Latin. **Appeal.**]

Fourth motive. On account of the sublimity of this end, so sublime that God Himself has none more exalted. **Explain**: the time was when this world did not exist, when there was no sun, no moon, nor stars in the firmament above, as there was no earth here below, &c. The time was—but it was not time, it was Eternity, before all time—when God alone existed, and in that Eternity, vast, unbounded, without beginning as without end, what was the employment of the Almighty God? How sublime to think of it! O! lift up your eyes on high, and contemplate the great Eternal seated on His throne of majesty before all creation, He is employed in knowing Himself, loving Himself, forming plans of the great works He is to execute in time for His own glory. Thus is God His own Beginning and His own End, by the necessity of His Being, there being no other end worthy of His divine majesty. Now, it was with this view that He created man to His own image and likeness; that having an understanding, he would know his Creator; that having a will, he would love Him; and that having a body and soul, he would use all the faculties and powers of both in serving Him, honouring Him, and glorifying Him: in a word, that he would concur with God Himself in pursuit of the same end, that occupied God Himself from Eternity to Eternity. What a thought! How glorious! How transporting! With this thought before his mind it was that holy Job exclaimed: "*What is man, O Lord, that Thou shouldst magnify him? or why dost Thou set Thy heart upon him?*" (*Job* vii. 17.) It is for this reason our Divine Saviour exhorts us "*to be perfect as our Heavenly Father is perfect,*" (*Matt.* v. 48); and St. Paul, "*Be ye therefore followers of God, as most dear*

children." (*Ephes.* v. 1). And it was because man lost sight of this end, of honouring God, and promoting His glory by the offices of Religion, that the Psalmist complains: "*Man when he was in honour did not understand: he hath been compared to senseless beasts, and made like to them.*" (*Ps.* xlviii. 21). **Appeal.**

2. *The Offices of Religion.*

Observe that in a wider sense the virtue of Religion comprises all our duties towards God; but that in the strict meaning, which Theology ascribes to it, its offices are restricted to devotion, prayer, and sacrifice.

Define Devotion; and observe respecting Prayer and Sacrifice, that they furnish extensive subjects for several addresses, and that at present you can only allude to them.

3. *Abuses of Religion.*

They are very various, some owing to ignorance, and others to depravity, but they may be classed under three heads—Idolatry, Superstition, and Sacrilege.

Define each, and say a passing word on Idolatry, deploring the blindness and stupidity of it. **Mention** the various kinds of superstitions, **enumerating** them as in the Catechism, and after defining sacrilege, **say a few words** in condemnation of it.

Conclusion.

Exhort to fervour in the practice of all the duties of Religion, **using** the motives above mentioned in a summary way.

Consult Bishop Hay's "Devout Christian," vol. 1, chap. ii. quest. 15, for development of motives, and chap. x., sect. 3, 4, 5, on the sins against Religion. **Consult** Theology, also on the first precept of the Decalogue, Tract. de Religione.

N.B.—Before each motive repeat your proposition, as also at the close, before appeal.

FIRST DISCOURSE ON
THE SECOND COMMANDMENT OF GOD.

WHAT IS COMMANDED BY THIS COMMANDMENT.

Announce the Commandment for your text.

Introduction.

Observe, that God being our Creator and Sovereign Lord, we owe Him the service of our entire being, body and soul; that being ennobled above all visible creation by the gift of speech, we are particularly to use this precious gift in honouring His sacred Name, &c. Therefore, He says to us: "*Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain*," *&c.*

[A word to say how important this Commandment is. Invite attention, after which invoke a blessing.]

Body of the Subject.

1. The Name of God is the same as God Himself, so far as the sign is the same as the thing signified. **Explain** how by honouring or dishonouring the name of a fellow-being here on earth, parents or others, we honour or dishonour themselves. Therefore, for the same reason, the Almighty has declared Himself exceedingly jealous of the honour due to His Holy Name.

[Quote some remarkable Scripture texts, which you will find in "Concordance," under the title "*Nomen*," or in Hay's "Devout Christian," vol. 2, chap. xi., after which exhort and appeal]

2. *Different ways of honouring God's Holy Name.*

1st. *By prayer*—Say what prayer is; and lay stress on the words "to bless His holy Name." Observe how the Psalms, and other portions of the Sacred Scriptures, abound with praises, &c., of God's Holy Name, as also our prayer books; and how our Divine Saviour made the first petition of the Lord's Prayer an act of praise and blessing of the Name of God: "*Hallowed be Thy Name.*"

2ndly. *Blessing ourselves*—Hence we should begin our prayers and all other important works by saying "*In the name of the Father*," *&c.*

3rdly. *Blessing others*—Hence the pious custom of asking the blessing of Bishops and Priests, who invoke the Name of the Lord

in the blessings they impart. Hence also dutiful children ask their parents' blessing, who invoke the Name of God for that purpose. Hence, too, the pious practice of invoking a blessing in our salutations and farewell expressions. (Some examples.) Observe how Christian-like this habit, and deplore the substitution of the forms of modern, and what is called fashionable society.

4thly. *By vows.*—Define, and distinguish them from mere purposes or resolutions. Distinguish also the several sorts of vows, and discourage private vows made without the advice of confessor.

5thly. *Oaths.*—Define, and show how they do homage to God's Holy Name. Point out the conditions. Insist particularly on truth. and inveigh against perjury.

Conclusion.

Say we have now seen the various ways of honouring God's holy Name. Recapitulate them, and add: we have also seen how jealous the Almighty is of the honour due to His holy Name. Let us make great account of the command the Most High gives us in the matter, and resolve, &c.

Consult Bishop Hay's "Devout Christian," vol. 2, chap. xi.; as also Theology on the Decalogue.

SECOND DISCOURSE ON
THE SECOND COMMANDMENT OF GOD.

WHAT IS FORBIDDEN BY THIS COMMANDMENT.

Introduction.

Recite Commandment for text, and refer to previous Instruction, briefly recapitulating the points; and proceed to say, that having considered how God's Holy Name is honoured in the preceding discourse, we are now to consider how it may be dishonoured.

[A few words on the importance of the subject. Invite the attention of the audience, and beg a blessing.]

Body of the Subject.

1. State it, by saying the Second Commandment is violated, and God's Holy Name dishonoured by [here quote the Catechism], and

observe that having considered the subject of oaths and vows in previous Instruction, you will confine yourself to the subject of blasphemy, cursing, and profane swearing.

[See "Devout Christian," vol. 2, chap. xi., sec. 4.]

2. *Remedies against these evil habits.*

1st. Resolution renewed every morning.

2ndly. Vigilance, and an act of sorrow immediately when any violation occurs of the resolution.

3rdly. To do some penance at night, when one has to accuse himself of any violation of the resolution; and to continue in these practices till the bad habit be subdued.

Conclusion.

Refer to the considerations, and call upon the audience to join you in a solemn act of abhorrence of the vices in question, and a resolution to avoid and discountenance them in others.

Consult, as above, Hay's "Devout Christian," "Challoner's Meditations," Sept. 24; also Theology on the subject.

THE THIRD COMMANDMENT OF GOD.

For text recite the Commandment.

Introduction.

The three first Commandments relate to the honour due to God, and, having treated of the first and second, it will be in order for us to proceed to the third. The worship we render to God is partly interior and partly exterior; partly public and partly private. Every individual by himself alone is bound to worship God both interiorly and exteriorly; but as God is not only the God of each of us in particular, but of the whole human family at large, we are bound to unite in rendering Him public homage. Hence the Almighty has provided for this obligation by appointing one day in the week for His servants here on earth to refrain from bodily labour, in order to be free to combine in rendering Him public honour on that day. This

is the end of the Commandment comprised in the words, "*Remember that thou*," *&c.*

[Some words to say how important this Commandment is, immediately affecting, like the two preceding ones, the honour of God, and binding on all Christians of all conditions, rich and poor, after which invoke a blessing.]

Body of the Subject.

1. Statement respecting the divine institution of the Sabbath before the Commandments were given to Moses; its renewal in the Mosaic dispensation, and its translation from the last to the first day of the week in the New Law.

2. *Considerations*, for which consult Bishop Hay's "Devout Christian," vol. 2, chap. xii. sec. 1, on the sanctification of the Sunday.

3. *In what consists the sanctification of the Lord's Day?*

1st. In avoiding the works forbidden: Questions 7, 8. 2ndly, In doing the works required: 9, 10, 11, 12, *Ibid.*

Conclusion

Having before us this great Commandment, let us resolve on fulfilling its obligations. The precept comes from God. He shows how particularly He desires its observance by saying: "*Remember.*" Here briefly recapitulate the various considerations, and finish with a few words of exhortation.

Consult Theology on the Decalogue, and Bishop Hay as above.

FIRST DISCOURSE ON

THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT OF GOD.

DUTIES OF CHILDREN TO THEIR PARENTS.

For text quote the Commandment.

Introduction.

Observe, that God wrote with His own hand the Ten Commandments on two tables or slabs of stone, and gave them so written to Moses: that the three first Commandments relating

immediately to the honour due to God occupied one of these tables, and that the seven remaining Commandments occupied the other, and relate to the duties of man to his fellow-man; that in the head and front of these duties the Almighty placed those, which children owe to their parents, by saying in the words of the text, "*Honour thy Father and thy Mother;*" that, on account of a similarity of position, this Commandment extends from children to servants, and to persons in lawful subjection to others; that also it comprises the duties of parents to children, on account of the necessary mutual relations between both, and that all persons in authority, such as masters and mistresses, holding a position like to that of parents with regard to those placed under their charge, are also brought within the scope of the fourth Commandment of God; that, therefore, this Commandment presents four distinct subjects: one, the duties of children towards their parents; a second, the duties of parents towards their children; a third, the duties of servants, and persons under authority to masters and mistresses, and those lawfully placed over them; and finally, the duties of masters and mistresses, and those in authority to those subject to their charge. Behold the extent of this great precept. We are all comprehended within its scope: for who is not in the position of a child, or a parent; of a servant, or one in a state of lawful subjection; or of a master or mistress, or a person otherwise in authority? Hence, &c.

Proceed to say, that in order to take the subjects just enumerated in due order, you will begin with the duties of children towards their parents, and make it the subject of present instruction.

[A word on its importance, and invoke a blessing.]

Body of the Subject.

1. Considerations.

Having laid down, that when you speak of Children, you are not to be understood as referring only to persons within the years of childhood, but to all persons without exception, whatever be their age, who have parents still living, whence God does not say, "child, honour thy father," &c., but in unlimited terms, "*Honour*," &c., you will proceed to the following considerations:—

First consideration grounded on duty. **Develop.**

Second consideration grounded on gratitude. **Develop.**

Third consideration grounded on interest. **Develop.**

2. The duties are: 1st, love; 2ndly, respect; 3rdly, obedience. Treat each distinctly.

Consult Bishop Hay's "Devout Christian," vol. 2, chap. xiv. sec. 1.; "Challoner's Meditations," Sept. 26; as also Theology on the Decalogue.

N.B.—In treating the several duties, and in inculcating them, you will condemn the opposite vice, both of which illustrate by anecdotes, for which consult St. Liguori—Office of St. Benedict XI., 5 July, V. Lesson.

SECOND DISCOURSE ON

THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT OF GOD.

DUTIES OF PARENTS TOWARDS THEIR CHILDREN.

"*Fathers provoke not your children to anger; but bring them up in the discipline and correction of the Lord.*"—EPHES. vi. 4.

INTRODUCTION.

The Fourth Commandment, teaching expressly of the duties of children towards their parents, involves also the duties of parents with regard to their children, inasmuch as children cannot be as children towards their parents unless the parents be what parents ought to be towards them. Hence, having considered the duties of children in reference to parents, it will be in order to consider the duties of parents towards their children. We find both combined in the Scriptures. St. Paul, after exhorting children to be obedient to their parents, immediately speaks to parents, and, in the words of my text, says, *Fathers, &c.:* and writing to the Colossians, after saying to children, "*obey your parents in all things,*" he addresses himself immediately to parents, saying: "*Fathers provoke not your children to indignation, lest they be discouraged.* (*Coloss.* iii. 21). We therefore only follow the example set us by the Apostle, in proceeding to treat of the duties of parents, after having treated in our preceding discourse of the duties of children.

[A word on the importance of this subject.]

O how important this subject! Let us but have good parents and we shall have good children, and the parents being good, and the children good, behold the world regenerated, and the face of the earth renewed.

[Bespeak attention and invoke a blessing.]

Body of the Subject.

1. *Considerations.*

1st. The words of St. Paul (1 *Tim.* v. 8). 2ndly, the duty of parents to God. 3rdly, their happiness here, and eternal happiness hereafter.

Consult Bishop Hay's "Devout Christian," chap. xiv., sec. 2.

N.B.—In stating these considerations be strong and brief.

2. *The duties of parents.*

They are of two sorts: those relating to the body and those relating to the soul. The first are, to provide their children with food and clothing, and to prepare them, and put them forward in life, according to their state and condition. Unnecessary to enlarge upon these duties, were it not required to allude to a class of human beings, who, human beings though they are, are guilty of the most cruel inhumanity towards their wives and children. Need I say, I allude to drunkards, who squander away in dissipation, and brutal—nay, worse than brutal—indulgence, these earnings, these means, they owe to their families. O drunkard! look at your children! they are in rags; they are pining away in hunger and want; you have the means of clothing them, of feeding them, and you prefer running off to the public-house, and spending those means amidst the din and uproar of that haunt of sin, whilst the offspring that God has given you, are suffering the agonies of hunger, amidst weeping and wailing at home. O drunkard! look at that woman, your wife. You promised in the face of the Church, and before high heaven, that whatever worldly substance you would possess you would share it with her. How do you keep that promise? Behold her tattered and worn-out clothing, her emaciated form, whilst she is endeavouring to supply the stream of life to that shrivelled-up babe, that is hanging from her breast. O drunkard! to whom shall I compare you? To the savage that roams in the forest? No; he, savage though he is, preserves the instincts of humanity, and he will toil and

labour to the last effort of life to rear his children. Shall I compare you to the brute beast? Oh! is it not of you the Holy Ghost has said: "*he is compared to senseless beasts, and is become like to them.*" (*Ps.* xlviii. 13). No; we must look lower still. The brute animal is your superior. Yes, drunkard! it is to you St. Chrysostom appeals, when he says, "how much is the ass superior to the drunkard? how much better is the dog? for these animals, when they have eaten and drunk what satisfies the wants of appetite, cannot be made to eat or drink more, even though a thousand men were to force them to do so. How much worse, therefore, are you than these irrational animals! you who indulge in drunkenness." O drunkard! that the voice of God would reach your heart this evening, and that, once for all, you would renounce a vice which keeps your wife and children in misery, and is hurrying yourself into hell, where, like the rich glutton, you shall not have for all eternity, even a drop of cold water to assuage, ever so little, your burning tongue.

3. *The duties parents owe to the souls of their children are;* 1st, to instruct them; 2ndly, to watch over them; 3rdly, to correct them; 4thly, to pray for them; 5thly, to give them good example.

See Bishop Hay's "Devout Christian," vol. 2, chap. xiv., sec. 2.

Enforce these duties, at the same time briefly reprobating, as you go along, the contrary abuses.

N.B.—In enforcing the duty of parents praying for their children, quote the example of Job, and apply it (*Job* i. 5).

Conclusion.

Recapitulate the considerations briefly, and close with a promise of peace and happiness with their children here in this life, and a happy companionship with them in heaven, as the recompense of having fulfilled the duties of good Christian parents towards their children, &c.

Consult Bishop Hay as above referred to; as also Theology on the Decalogue.

THIRD DISCOURSE ON

THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT OF GOD.

DUTIES OF SERVANTS AND PERSONS UNDER AUTHORITY.

"*Servants, be obedient to them that are your lords according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in the simplicity of your heart, as to Christ. Not serving to the eye, as it were pleasing men, but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, with a good will serving, as to the Lord, and not to men.*"—EPHES. vi. 5, 6, 7.

INTRODUCTION.

Observe, that the state of dependence, in which servants, and all persons under authority, are placed, with respect to those who are over them, being so like the condition, in many respects, of children with regard to their parents, their duties are classed under the Fourth Commandment of God, and are treated as a development or extension of that Commandment. Hence this very important class of our Christian brethren presents a special subject of instruction suited to their particular position in life. The Apostle considered them worthy of special notice, as we see in our text; and, following his example, we will, in God's name, devote to them the words of instruction we are going to address to you this evening.

[A word to bespeak attention, &c.]

Need I say how important this subject is? How large a share of the happiness and well-being of society depends upon servants and those in subordinate positions. How much also their own happiness, not only for this life, but for the life to come also, depends on fulfilling their duties as good Christians, according to their state. Let us then give all our attention to so important a subject, and let us ask beforehand God's holy grace, &c.

BODY OF THE SUBJECT.

1. *Considerations.* See Bishop Hay's "Devout Christian," vol. 2, chap. xxiv., sect. 3. Enforce these considerations briefly, but strongly and earnestly.

2. *Their duties.* See *Ibid.* Inculcate these duties by a word of exhortation after each, and inveigh against the contrary abuses.

Conclusion.

Briefly sum up the considerations, on which ground an exhortation.

Consult Bishop Hay as referred to; and Theology on the Decalogue.

FOURTH DISCOURSE ON

THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT OF GOD.

MASTERS, MISTRESSES, AND PERSONS IN AUTHORITY.

"Masters, do to your servants that which is just and equal, knowing that you also have a Master in heaven."—Coloss. iv. 1.

Introduction.

The Christian master and mistress hold the place of parents with regard to their servants; so likewise do all in authority with respect to those placed under them. Therefore, religion places their duties under the Fourth Commandment of God, and they should understand, and constantly feel, that they themselves have a Master over them in heaven, to whom they will have one day to render an account of their obligations. Our subject this evening, therefore, will be the duties of masters and mistresses, and persons in authority.

How important this subject, and all the more because it is not understood, and fails, therefore, to be observed.

[Invite attention and ask a blessing.]

Body of the Subject.

1. *Considerations.* See Bishop Hay's "Devout Christian," vol. 2, chap. xiv., sec. 4, quest. 34. Exhort by urging these considerations *in globo*, after detailing them singly in order.

2. *Duties.* See *Ibid.* quest. 35 and 36, 1, 2, 3, 4.

Conclusion.

Behold, therefore, masters and mistresses, and all in authority, behold your duties towards your servants and those placed under your charge. These duties you are bound to by, &c.

[Here a rapid summary of the considerations, after which a few earnest words of exhortation.]

Consult Bishop Hay as referred to above; as also Theology on the Decalogue.

FIFTH DISCOURSE ON

THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT OF GOD.

THE DUTIES OF HUSBAND AND WIFE.

"*Wives, be subject to your husbands, as it behoveth in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter towards them.*"—Coloss. iii. 18, 19

Introduction.

The Fourth Commandment of God having brought us within the family circle, has presented to our notice the heads of the family; for they who are father and mother, and they who are master and mistress, are also husband and wife with regard to each other, and they fulfil their duties to those under their charge in proportion as they acquit themselves of the duties they mutually owe each other. Therefore it is, that the Apostle combines the duties of husband and wife with those of masters and persons in authority. Hence, following the example of the Apostle, we will make the duties of those whom God has joined in holy wedlock, the subject of a particular instruction.

[A word on the importance.]

How important this subject! Husband and wife are bound together in bonds which God Himself has bound, and are to go through life for better or worse, for richer or poorer, in sickness and in health, until death puts them asunder. But having

been thus united here upon earth, are they to be associated hereafter in glory? It depends upon how they will perform towards each other their mutual obligations.

[Invite attention and ask a blessing.]

Body of the Subject.

1. *Considerations.* Consult Bishop Hay's "Devout Christian," vol. 2, chap. xiv. sec. 5, quest. 38. Treat the points briefly but forcibly.

2. *Duties.* See *Ibid.* quest. 39 to the end; also St. Gregory Nazianzen, his poem to St. Olympias; vid. his life, 9th May, towards the end. Butler.

First duty, mutual affection.

Second duty, the maintenance of authority on the part of the husband, and of respect, obedience, and deference on the part of the wife. Vide anecdote infra.

Third duty, patience in bearing with each other.

Fourth duty, good example to each other.

Fifth duty, to pray for each other.

N.B.—In laying down those duties, quote a text, or give a reason for each. Whilst distinct in your statements, be guarded in the expressions you use.

Add one or two of the examples, Bishop Hay, *Ibid.* towards the end, especially that of St. Monica.

Anecdote from the life of St. Macarius. It was revealed to him, that holy though he was, he had not attained the sanctity of two married women, who lived in a neighbouring town. He inquired about them, and found, that amongst their other virtues, they were particularly distinguished by the patience and mildness with which they bore the humours and failings of their husbands. Vid. Life of Saint, January 18. Butler.

Consult as above; as also Theology on the Decalogue.

THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT OF GOD.

"*Thou shalt not kill.*"—EXOD. xx. 31.

INTRODUCTION.

These words have been familiar to you from your childhood. They announce the fifth of God's Commandments. After regulating family life, by appointing the duties of children towards their parents, of parents towards their children, of servants, and those under authority, to masters and mistresses, and of masters and mistresses to servants, and those under their care, in fine, after showing the relative obligations of husband and wife, the Almighty would place us face to face with our fellow-man, in the large range of human society, and teach us our duties in his regard: our duties towards him in person, property, character, and reputation. The Fifth Commandment, which is set forth in our text, regards his person; and though it speaks directly only of the horrid crime of murder, it comprises all other sins, which remotely or immediately lead to murder, such as fighting, quarrelling, anger, hatred, and revenge. The Fifth Commandment, then, presents a wide scope for instruction; and, with God's help, we shall, in due order, proceed to treat of the various subjects comprised in it. For the present subject, we shall have sufficient matter in the outward injuries forbidden by this Commandment, viz., murder, fighting, and quarrelling, and injurious words.

Say how the subject of itself commands attention, and beg of God the grace to reflect on it with profit, so that your audience may shudder at the thought of the vices you will have to bring under their notice.

BODY OF THE SUBJECT.

1. To begin with the crime of murder, God Himself holds up this crime to the detestation of mankind, as a sin crying to heaven for vengeance.

Say it is the first sin of which the Scripture takes notice after the fall of Adam, the sin of Cain murdering his brother Abel.

Relate the history of it as told in the Sacred Scripture; and, returning on the narrative, dwell on the voice of Abel's blood crying to heaven for vengeance; and say:

As it was with the first murder, so has it been with every other committed to the present day. The murderer may have chosen the darkness of night, the lonely byway, or the desolate field, but in vain, the blood that is shed sends up a cry of vengeance to God, and the Almighty pronounces the sentence, "*Cursed shalt thou be upon the earth*," *&c.*: "*a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be on the face of the earth.*" (*Gen.* iv.) Such are the terrible words of the Almighty, denouncing His curse on unhappy Cain, and sending him forth with the mark of reprobation from the society of men. Struck down with this curse, and the remorse of his blood-stained conscience, which made him read in every man's looks his own condemnation, he cried out: "*My iniquity is greater than that I may deserve pardon*" (*ibid.*): and so he goes away from the society of the first race of human beings, becoming a vagabond and fugitive on the face of the earth. O unhappy Cain! and is not your unhappiness, and torture of conscience, the portion of every murderer? Yes, like yours, his conscience is a hell to him; and the victim in whose blood he imbrued his hands, is always before his eyes. Let him stay at home, or go abroad, the phantom is there; it affrights his dreams at night, and tortures his soul by day. O the murderer! where will he go, or what will he do to relieve himself? Unable to find any remedy, how often does he not go and give himself up to justice, as a man unworthy to live, after having taken away the life of his fellow-man.

See "Devout Christian," vol. 2, chap. xv. Enlarge.

2. **Repeat** "*Thou shalt not kill*," and **remark** that the Almighty does not say, "*Thou shalt not kill thy neighbour*," but simply, "*Thou shalt not kill:*" to give us to understand that we are not to kill ourselves any more than our neighbour. Yes, he who kills himself is a murderer, and a thousand times a more unnatural murderer than he who kills his neighbour, since he goes against the strongest principle which God has implanted in the heart of man, viz., that of self-preservation. So strong is this principle, that although the world was inhabited for thousands of years, the Old Testament speaks of only one case of deliberate suicide, that of Achitophel (2 *Kings* xvii. 23); and the New Testament of only one other, that of Judas. No man has power over his own life. It was God who gave it, and he must wait for Him to take it away. "*It is appointed*,"

as the Apostle says, "*for men to die;*" and to anticipate the moment fixed in the decrees of heaven, by depriving ourselves of life, is murder.

Enlarge. See Butler's Lives of the Saints; St. Pelagia, 9th June, towards the end.

3. There remains another kind of murder, which requires special mention, the murder of duelling. Yes, we must call it murder, and a double murder; for, whilst the duellist seeks the death of his antagonist, he risks his own life.

Say, whatever the world thinks of duelling, religion must hold up to execration, as it has always done, this terrible crime.

Oh! the rich glutton wished to get back to life, in order to warn his five brothers of the fire of hell, and the duellist, if he were allowed to return, what terror would he not impart to the wretch, who, following his example, would seem to disregard his dreadful fate in another world?

We could scarcely believe duelling possible between rational human beings, professing themselves Christians, had we not before us the dreadful evidence of facts. For, let us suppose we had a duellist present, who professes himself a Christian man, what should we say to him? Would it not be something to this effect? As a Christian you believe in hell, and you believe that, losing your life in a duel, you go straightway to hell. Now see your folly and madness. You have had a falling out with a fellow-man, and you wish to be revenged of him. With this intention, and for this unchristian purpose you present yourself to him for a deadly aim, or a deadly thrust, at you of some deadly weapon in his hand, and in so doing, you put yourself in his power to kill you, and send you to hell the moment he has done so, and now, being in hell, how have you avenged yourself of your enemy? O fool! O madman!! But it has not been enough for you to be a fool and a madman in your own regard, but you have been cruelly cruel towards others, for whom you should, indeed, be ready, did occasion require it, to lay down your life and spill your blood. You have left your wife a widow, and you have left your children orphans, and nevertheless you call yourself a rational being and a Christian!! But let us reverse the case, and suppose that you have shot down your adversary, for it is for this chance you exposed your own life. And in shooting him down what have you done? You have sent his body to a premature grave, and his soul to hell. And you

are a rational being, and you say you are a Christian! Alas! Alas! What a conscience you must have for the remainder of your days! As you go to bed at night, and think of the bed of fire to which you have consigned your brother-man, whom, as a Christian, you were bound to love as yourself, whom, although an enemy, you are bound to forgive. Oh, the thought, as you go to bed, of the flames you have lit up in hell around your fellow-being! And that poor woman, his wife, whom you have made a widow, and those poor children, whom you have made orphans. Alas! Alas! and notwithstanding you call yourself a man and a Christian. Tell us, if a demon out of hell could assume human form, what could he have done worse than you have done to that unfortunate man, whom you have sent to hell, and to that afflicted wife, and those hapless children he has left behind him? O unhappy man! an eternity would be too short to deplore your duel, and not with ordinary tears, but, if possible, with tears of blood.

4. *Fighting and quarrelling, and injurious words.*

See Bishop Hay's "Devout Christian." vol. 2, chap. xv. Quote some texts, especially 1 *Cor.* xi. 16; whence *infer* that persons, addicted to the vices in question are unfit members of the Church. See likewise "Butler's Lives of the Saints," St. Pelagia (9th June), towards the end. Follow up this idea, by considering such a person in the midst of a town, &c., how everybody fears and avoids him. Consider the case in family life of the husband abusing, or, still worse, raising his hand to strike his wife, contrary to the precepts of the Apostle, "*Husbands love your wives, as Christ loves His Church*" (*Eph.* v. 25); or, suppose the wife, instead of being subject to her husband, as the same Apostle requires, tormenting him with a wicked temper and tongue.

Consider, further, the cruel parents eternally scolding, abusing, and sometimes, even cursing their children, &c.; and the children disobedient to their parents, and fighting and quarrelling amongst themselves. O what a state of things! A hell upon earth, where "*no order, but everlasting confusion abides.*" (*Job* x. 22). Oh! is it not enough to contemplate such a house, such a family, to detest these vices?

Conclusion.

Briefly recapitulate the points. Behold some of the vices of the fifth Commandment—murder, &c. Finish with a prayer, begging of God to infuse a horror of these vices into the hearts of the audience, &c.

Consult as above referred to.

SECOND DISCOURSE ON

THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT OF GOD.

ENVY, ANGER, HATRED AND REVENGE.

"*You have heard that it was said to them of old: Thou shalt not kill. And whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment. But I say to you, that whosoever is angry with his brother, shall be in danger of the judgment. And whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council. And whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.*"—MATT. v. 21, 22.

INTRODUCTION.

Our Divine Lord comes, as He Himself says, not to destroy the law but to fulfil it. Therefore, he goes to the root of things and would cure our vices in the very root. Now, the root of our vices is our heart, for it is from the heart, as He assures us, that murders, as well as other crimes, come forth. (*Matt.* xv. 19). Consequently, wishing to uphold the Commandment, "*Thou shalt not kill*," He points out to us certain vices which are in the heart, and which must be cured in the heart, in order to place this Commandment in full security, and out of danger of being violated. These vices are, envy, anger, hatred, and revenge; for by an unhappy combination, we find that envy leads to hatred, that anger leads to hatred also, and that hatred leads to revenge, and revenge to deeds of violence on the person of our neighbour, and is the ordinary forerunner of murder. Our subject therefore for this instruction is to consist of the vices of envy, anger, hatred, and revenge.

[A word or two to bespeak attention, and invoke a blessing.]

BODY OF THE SUBJECT.

1. *Considerations.* Enough to name the vices, to see how opposed they are to fraternal charity, and the general spirit of Christianity. How can an envious man, a man given to the passion of anger, a man with a heart full of hatred, a man thirsting for revenge, call himself a follower of Him, Who, "*when reviled did not revile; Who allowed Himself to be led like a sheep to the slaughter,*" *&c.*, and Who, hanging upon the cross, prayed

for those who nailed Him to that ignominious gibbet, and who were blaspheming Him at the very moment He was praying for them. Oh, no! he is no follower of a mild and merciful Saviour; and while he calls himself a Christian, he dishonours that sacred name.

2. A few words upon each of the vices separately.

See Bishop Hay's "Devout Christian," vol. 2, chap. xv., sec. 11.

In treating revenge, quote *Matt.* v. 38, and following verses; also v. 23–44. Apply these texts to the vice of revenge. Relate history of Joseph briefly, and the prayer of our Saviour upon the cross. (*Luke* xxiii. 34).

It would be well, also, before concluding, to refer to the case of neighbours who may be at variance, and not on speaking terms with each other, and exhort them to be reconciled. This may be done in a formal way, by the parties saying to each other: "We have not been on good terms with each other this time past, let us be better neighbours for the future," or some such words. Observe, that although the person who first occasioned the coolness should make the first advances, yet charity does not stand upon points, and the other will have more merit by going forward first. The reconciliation may be less formal by interchanging the civilities of life, as if nothing had happened, by borrowing and lending, as good neighbours do, and saluting each other when they meet.

Relate the fact of St. Nicephorus and the priest Sapricius. ("Butler's Lives of the Saints," February 9).

Conclusion.

We have now reviewed the several vices we undertook to treat of, the vices of envy, &c. We see how opposed they are to the entire spirit of the Christian religion; how they are condemned by the Word of God. Is there a tinge of these vices in our souls? O let us efface it by putting on the spirit of our Redeemer, a spirit of benevolence and mildness, of returning good for evil, and forgiving from our hearts any wrong done against us, that we may be children of our Father, Who is in heaven, "*Who maketh His sun,*" *&c.* (*Matt.* v. 45).

Consult as above, and also Theology on the Decalogue.

THIRD DISCOURSE ON

THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT OF GOD.

Drunkenness.

"*Envies, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like. Of the which I foretell you, as I have foretold to you, that they who do such things shall not obtain the kingdom of God.*"—Gal. v. 21.

Introduction.

The two preceding instructions you have heard were on the Fifth Commandment, "*Thou shalt not kill;*" and as this Commandment condemns all sins that are the cause, or the occasion of murder, or lead in any way to it, we cannot avoid speaking of a vice, which besides leading every day thousands of human beings who are guilty of it, to a premature death, is the unceasing cause of anger, hatred and revenge; puts men against their fellow-men in hostile strife, engaging them in quarrelling and fighting, and not unfrequently ending in bloodshed and massacre. This vice is the debasing, and, sad to say, the widespread vice of drunkenness. It is, indeed, a distressing thing that the Preacher of God's Word, addressing his fellow-beings endowed with reason as himself, should find it necessary to excite their abhorrence of a vice that deprives them of reason, and degrades them beneath the brute creation. Alas! poor human nature, what a comment on thy corruption, that being the lord of God's creation in this world, man will not understand his elevation, but must debase himself beneath the senseless animals, over whom he was appointed to exercise dominion and control.

To whom am I to address myself on this subject? To the drunkard! Yes, and to the sober man, too. To the first, in the hope that my words, aided by God's grace, may draw him out of his degradation; and, to the latter, that, conceiving a just horror of drunkenness, he may fly all occasions and temptations that would lead him to it.

Let us, then, raise our hearts to heaven, &c.

BODY OF THE SUBJECT.

1. *Considerations.* Where shall we find reasons to excite our dread and horror of the vice of drunkenness? They present themselves on every side.

1st. It shuts the gates of heaven against the drunkard. There can be no mistake. The Apostle St. Paul reckons up a list of sins which shut heaven against those who commit them, and he sets down the sin of drunkenness amongst them. **Quote** 1 *Cor.* vi. 10, **and exclaim:** O drunkard, open your eyes and see the company in which the Word of God places you, side by side with (**here enumerate**)—**adding**, and with them, too, shuts you out for ever from the kingdom of God, and condemns you, &c. Were it permitted to us, as it was to many of God's saints, to get a sight of hell in a vision, how many thousands of thousands of drunkards should we see there? Miserable wretches! They would not refrain from intoxicating drinks during life, and now they cannot get, nor can they get for all eternity, as much as one single drop of water to cool their burning tongues. **Appeal.**

2ndly. The vice of drunkenness does not go alone; it is accompanied by another vice, which heaps enormity upon enormity. What other vice? That vice which the Preacher of God's Word must always pronounce with horror and disgust, the vice of impurity. Do I speak from myself in pointing out to you this cursed companionship of those two odious vices? No! Almighty God declares it. (**Quote** *Eccl.* xix. 2. *Prov.* xx. 1; *Ephes.* v. 18.) St. Jerome, "I shall never believe a drunkard to be a chaste man." St. Ambrose, "Wherever there is drunkenness, there, beyond all doubt, is lust."

Appeal to experience, and the agreement of all upon the matter, and lament the misery of parents, saying:

O parents, guard your children from the vice of drunkenness. The day you have lost them by this vice, you have lost them by another, and the devil has two most terrible chains about their souls, &c.

3rdly. It degrades the drunkard beneath the level of the brute beast. The Psalmist, deploring the degradation of human nature, says (**Quote** xlviii. 13). He laments, that in his degradation, the sinner lowers himself to the level of the irrational beast of burden; but it is not the drunkard he has in view; the

unhappy drunkard descends to a lower level ; he degrades himself below the brute animal. It is on this account St. Chrysostom cries out: "O drunkard, drunkard, how much is the ass your superior! How much is the dog above you! These poor animals, when they have eaten and drunk as much as their appetite demands, will eat or drink no more, even though a thousand men should seek to compel them. How much, therefore, are you inferior to those irrational creatures, you drunkards; you who indulge to excess in intoxicating drinks!" **Appeal.** Will you not be ashamed of this comparison, and, breaking the chains of your evil habit, will you not, &c.?

4thly. It brings the drunkard to an untimely grave. We shudder at wars, famines, and pestilences. Why? Because they bring death. And drunkenness. Will we not shudder at it for the same reason? Alas! how many wives are deprived of their husbands in early life, and are left to pine away in misery the rest of their days! How many children are deprived of their parents, and in their innocence thrown into all the temptations of want and misery!

[Follow up this view, and appeal.]

5thly. And how does he end his days? I will not speak of the brawls and fighting of the public-house, of those scenes of violence and bloodshed, in which many a man is sent in a fit of drunkenness to appear before his God—that God who has pronounced eternal condemnation on the drunkard. O what a death! I will not speak of those scenes, over which, if possible, heaven would weep, and hell rejoice ; but come with me to the convict prison ; let us go from cell to cell ; let us attend the trials for capital offences in the public courts throughout the country ; let us follow the culprit to the gallows. Who are the miserable wretches on whom the vengeance of the law has so terribly fallen? Who are they? How have they come to this miserable and ignominious plight? O, drunkenness! Yes, in nine cases out ten it was drunkenness that inspired the dreadful deeds. It was drunkenness that nerved the criminal's arm to perpetrate the fearful crimes that have brought these unhappy beings to such a disgraceful position. **Appeal.** One such fact in a hundred years should be enough to make us execrate its cause, and yet the drunkard will not, &c.

6thly. But I will appeal to another motive : a motive which

should come home to the heart of the drunkard, unless, indeed, every spark of humanity be extinct within his bosom. I will go home with him to his wife and family. I will ask him to look at that afflicted woman, to whom, before God in heaven, and before God's Church upon earth, he vowed his strength, and health, and life, to make her happy. Let him look her in the face; how can he withstand the reproaches of his guilty conscience, as he beholds, &c. (**Picture both wife and children.**) Then **exclaim**: O drunkard! what are your feelings at this scene of misery, which your drunkenness has wrought within your own home, in the circle of your own family, in your wife and children? O drunkard! you are not a man, you are a monster, if this harrowing scene does not move, &c. (*Joel* i. 5).

2. *Application of the foregoing considerations.* I have been speaking of drunkards in all that I have said, but I have others in view besides. Drunkards did not intend to become drunkards in the beginning. Like all other vices, drunkenness has its beginning, its progress, and its completion; and, as prevention is better than cure, I wish not only, as I have said, to draw the drunkard out of his evil habit, but to prevent the sober man from falling into it.

Proceed, 1st, to advise parents to be most strict with respect to their children; 2ndly, to advise every one, especially young persons, to avoid the company, not only of confirmed drunkards, but also of those who make too free with drink; 3rdly, to avoid the use of intoxicating drinks except in case of necessity, or when other and imperious reasons may require one to take something, and then to confine one's self within the limits of the strictest temperance.

Conclusion.

We have before our minds the vice of drunkenness. We see how it shuts the gates of heaven, &c.

[Here sum up the motives, and conclude with a fervent exhortation.]

Consult Bishop Hay's "Devout Christian," vol. 2, chap. xvi. sec. iv.; also "Challoner's Meditations," October 21 and 22, &c.

FOURTH DISCOURSE ON
THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT OF GOD.

SCANDAL.

"*Woe to that man by whom scandal cometh.*"—MATT. xviii. 7.

INTRODUCTION.

We are still engaged with the Fifth Commandment. So far, we have considered it chiefly in reference to the bodily life and bodily welfare of our neighbours. But we are to bear in mind that the Almighty does not say, thou shalt not kill the body, but in general terms, He says: "*Thou shalt not kill.*" Now, we must keep in view, that we are composed of two substances, a body and a soul; and as the body has its own life, so the soul has its own life too; and, consequently, we must infer that the precept saying to us, "*Thou shalt not kill*," applies to the life of both soul and body, and more forcibly to the life of the soul, as it is so much more precious than that of the body. Now, we kill or injure the soul of our neighbour by leading him into sin by any act or word of ours that has this effect; and such an act, and such a word, is what we call scandal in the sense of our text, "*Woe to that man by whom scandal cometh.*"

Scandal, therefore, comes within the scope of the Fifth Commandment, and is to be the subject of our address to you this evening.

A word to engage attention, observing: That every one is shocked at the crime of murder, or doing any bodily hurt to our neighbour, and few, very few, are guilty of such a crime; but we are not shocked at the thought of killing or hurting his soul, that is, in other words, of giving him scandal; and, alas! how few there are who are not guilty of this terrible crime. Hence the importance of the subject.

[Invoke a blessing.]

BODY OF THE SUBJECT.

Considerations. 1st. *We are to be shocked at the sin of scandal, because the scandal-giver makes himself the agent and helpmate of*

the devil. How is this? Is not the devil constantly employed in destroying the souls of men, by leading them into sin? Hence he is called the "tempter" in the Scripture (*Matt.* iv. 3); and by leading them into sin he succeeds in killing their souls within them. Therefore our Divine Lord says, "*he was a murderer from the beginning*" (*John* viii. 44), slaying the souls of men by depriving them of the life of the soul, a life a thousand times more precious than the life of the body. This is his constant occupation, and therefore it is, that "*he goeth about as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour*" (1 *Pet.* v. 8). Now the giver of scandal, that is (explain), makes himself the devil's agent in this devilish work of destroying souls!

Show how, and then show what a soul is possessing the life of grace, and by contrast what the scandal-giver makes her by depriving her of this life, after which appeal to a sense of honour.

2ndly. *The effects of scandal how widespread and lasting.* You cannot stop a rolling stone, once you have discharged it from your hand down the side of a hill or mountain. It rolls on to the bottom, increasing in velocity and force as it descends. You cannot arrest a fire, once you have set a building in flames. Neither can you stop a scandal, as it extends its effects far and wide, and continues its work of ruin on the souls of men, once you have been guilty of this soul-destroying evil. We are, by the constitution of our being, made to imitate each other, and on account of the corruption of our nature, we are more prone to imitate each other in evil than in good. Does not every one feel that it is so? Let any one listening recollect himself before God, and ask himself how he was led to commit the first grievous sin he remembers. Was he not led into it by the bad example, that is, by the scandal given him by another? Well, then, see how scandal pursues its career of ruin. You lead another into sin; he, in his turn, becomes, like you, a teacher of iniquity, and those whom he teaches, and those again whom they will teach, will become the propagators of your sin, doing thereby the work of the devil, slaying the souls of men. And where is the work of destruction to stop? You cannot stop it. Years may pass away, and you may be growing old. The evil you have done is constantly renewed, and is increasing in the intensity and strength of its evil-doing. You may pass to your account, but your scandal lives after you, going down from generation to

generation, and extending its work of havoc, as it continues its cursed existence. O scandal-giver! even though you have led only one soul into sin, count, if you can, all the sins this sin of yours has produced, and all these sins are your sins.

[Excite horror, contrition, &c.]

3rdly. *The scandal-giver is an enemy of the Cross of Christ.* Our Divine Lord died. Why? To give us life. (Quote *John* x. 10.) Now, for what does the scandal-giver come? That they may have death, and have it more abundantly.

Enlarge, by depicting the tragedy of Calvary, and showing the scandal-giver conspiring with the devil to render all this nugatory. &c. Mention the woes pronounced by our Divine Lord. (*Matt.* xviii. 6, 7.) Comment upon the words. Lament how general the vice, and how little people make of it. Mention St. Paul, who had such a horror of scandal, that if he thought by eating meat he should scandalize any of his brethren, he would never allow a bit of meat to pass his lips. (Quote 1 *Cor.* viii. 13).

2. Scandal is of two kinds, scandal given, of which we have been treating, and scandal received; and whilst we are to condemn the man by whom scandal is given, we cannot excuse those who receive or take scandal. It was no excuse for Adam to say it was Eve that gave him the forbidden fruit. Neither can we excuse ourselves, because it was by others we were led into sin. Our Divine Lord is most emphatic on this point.

Quote *Matt.* v. 29, 30; and apply the texts by saying, that the meaning is, that if a person be as dear to you as the eye of your head, and as valuable as the right hand of your body, &c.

3. *Those who give scandal, and against whom we are to be on our guard, not to receive scandal.* 1st. Notorious sinners, who are rocks of scandal.

[Enumerate some of the most ordinary cases.]

2ndly. Persons who, by companionship, would be a danger to each other.

Dwell upon those companionships called *courtships.* Denounce them, and inveigh against parents who allow too much liberty to their children, &c.

3rdly. Parents, who are guilty of cursing and swearing, or commit other sins, in presence of their children, or do not practise their religious duties. Extend the same charge to masters and mistresses.

4thly. Public-house keepers who give drink to excess.
5thly. Persons circulating bad books, songs, &c.

CONCLUSION.

What a crime the sin of scandal! a crime which, &c.

[Here sum up considerations. Exhort to pray for those whom we may have scandalized, to edify for the future, and remember our Saviour's words, "*better a millstone*," &c.]

Consult Bishop Hay's "Devout Christian," vol. 2, chap. xv., sec. v.; also Bourdaloue's "Spiritual Retreat" on the subject, &c.

FIFTH DISCOURSE ON
THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT OF GOD.

FRATERNAL CHARITY.

"*Before all things have a constant mutual charity among yourselves.*"—1 PET. iv. 8.

INTRODUCTION.

In the diseases of the body contraries are cured by contraries. So it is, likewise, in the diseases of the soul, or in vices. They are remedied by the opposite virtues. Consequently, as we are treating of the fifth Commandment, which, under the words, "*Thou shalt not kill*," forbids everything hurtful to the person of our neighbour, we will insure the observance of this Commandment, by the practice of a virtue which engages us in doing all that is good to our neighbour, both in soul and body. Need I say that this is the virtue of fraternal charity, or the love that should exist between man and man? This is the subject the Apostle brings before our minds in the words of our text, and it is the subject on which I desire to address you this evening. I need not ask your attention on such a subject. It engages every Christian heart by the mere mention of it. I have, therefore, only to ask you to lift up your hearts with me on high, &c.

Body of the Subject.

1. *Considerations.* 1st. The law of mutual love is written on the heart of man by the finger of God. Who is it, that does not read in his own heart, that he must not do to another that which he would not wish another to do to himself? (*Tobias* iv. 16; *Matt.* vii. 12). And again, who is it that does not feel the impulse within himself constantly urging him to do to others what he would reasonably desire others to do to himself in similar circumstances? (*Luke* vi. 31).

Infer, that a man should put himself outside the pale of humanity, who would refuse to acknowledge this law within his breast. Infer, further, if men were to act according to this law, the fifth Commandment should be in complete security. There would be no murders, no, &c. [Detail the sins against the fifth Commandment.]

2ndly. Quote *Matt.* xxii. 38, *Mark* xii. 31, to prove that the love of our neighbour ranks next to the love of God. Then quote *John* xiii. 34, and comment on the word "*new;*" after which quote *John* xv. 12, commenting on the words "*my*" and "*as I loved you;*" to show, *first*, the special regard He has for this precept; and *secondly*, the model He furnishes in His own love for us. Enlarge, somewhat on what He has done through love of us; and conclude this to be the example of our love for each other.

3rdly. Our love for each other, the proof to all mankind that we are true disciples of Christ, and that He was sent by His Eternal Father to establish His religion among men. Quote, to show this, *John* xiii. 35, and xvii. 20, 21. Observe how this was realized in the first Christians. See *Acts* iv. 32, &c. Relate the fact of Pacomius and Maxentius, as in Rodriguez, vol. 1, 4th treatise on fraternal charity, chap. 1. last paragraph but one.

4thly. Quote, various texts, *Col.* iii. 14; 1 *Pet.* iv. 8; 1 *John* ii. 10, 11. Relate, about St. John, when unable to preach, on account of his very great age, he used to have himself carried to the Church to say, "My children, love one another;" and, when asked why he continued to repeat himself so unceasingly, he replied: "This is the precept of our Lord, and if this be done, everything will be done." (*St. Jerome.*)

Infer, that the law of Christ is the law of love—of the love of God and our neighbour. (*Matt.* xxii. 37–40).

2. *Properties of fraternal charity.* 1st, *Interior.* The heart is its seat.

2ndly. *Active.* Here set down the various duties of charity or mercy, spiritual and corporal.

3rdly. *Universal*, including our enemies. Inculcate forgiveness of injuries, and pardoning of enemies. (*Luke* vi. 37; *Matt.* vi. 14,

23, xviii. *parable; Eccl.* xxviii. 3, 4, 5). Fact in the life of St. John Gualbert. See Breviary, or Butler's "Lives of the Saints," July 12. Relate also the fact of Sapricius and Nicephorus, as follows: During the 8th persecution under Valerian, A.D. 257, the city of Antioch was scandalized by the apostacy of a priest, named Sapricius. He refused to pardon a layman named Nicephorus, and continued in this uncharitable disposition, even to the place of execution. Here he apostatised; but Nicephorus, who had humbly asked his pardon, came forward and received the crown of martydom, instead of the unhappy priest. (See Rohrbacher, vol. 5, p. 500; also Butler's "Lives of the Saints," 9th February).

4thly. *Supernatural.* The love of God and the love of our neighbour being the same virtue in principle and motive. (*Matt.* xxii. 38, 39; *Mark* xii. 31; 1 *John* iv. 20).

Conclusion.

Sum up considerations and properties, and Express a desire, that this heaven-born virtue would be impressed on every Christian heart. Then, no more murders, no more fighting, &c. Peace and happiness would reign in society. Universal concord would rule families, &c.

Consult Theology on the subject; also Bishop Hay's "Devout Christian," vol. 2, chap. xiii., "On charity towards our Neighbour."

THE SIXTH COMMANDMENT OF GOD.

"*Thou shalt not commit Adultery.*"—Exod. xx. 14.

Introduction.

The Preacher of the pure Word of God must always approach the subject indicated in this Commandment with loathing reluctance: and he should prefer to remain for ever silent, and that his tongue should cleave to his jaws, rather than have occasion to speak of it. But as it is his sacred duty to cry out, and warn mankind of the lot awaiting the sinner in the world to come, so it is his duty occasionally to raise his voice against a vice, which, more than any other vice, is dragging souls down to hell. Let us, therefore, for our souls' good, bear with the dis-

gust which the consideration of this vice must cause, in order that with God's grace we may conceive a due horror of it, and that hating and abhorring it we may shun it, and all temptations leading to it.

[Invoke the Divine grace on your words and on the hearts of your audience.]

BODY OF THE SUBJECT.

1. *Considerations.* 1st. How shall we form a just idea of all that is loathsome and detestable in the vices opposed to the holy virtue of purity, and included in the sixth Commandment? We shall prepare ourselves for it by reflecting for a moment upon all that is lovely and heavenly in the angelic virtue of purity itself.

Adduce the example of our Divine Lord, who making Himself like to us in all things else, would be born, by way of special exception from the order of nature, of a virgin, and by the operation of the Holy Ghost; and whilst He permitted Himself to be assailed with all other calumnies, so as to be called a blasphemer, &c., He never allowed a whisper even to be uttered by His bitterest enemies against His immaculate purity. See "Devout Christian," vol 2, chap. xvi. sect. 1.

2ndly. So high is the esteem in which the Church holds the angelic virtue of purity, that she ranks it above martyrdom itself. For example, when in her Liturgy she presents to us a bishop, who died a martyr, she designates him "Martyr and Bishop," giving greater prominence to his title of martyr, but when she presents to us a virgin, who suffered martyrdom, she inverts the order, styling her "Virgin and Martyr," thereby giving her a higher dignity in the order of sanctity as a virgin, than as a martyr. In this the Church takes her inspiration from the special privileges of virgins as described in the Apocalypse. (*Vid.* chap. xiv.)

3rdly. From the high and holy idea we are thus taught to have of the virtue of holy purity, what must be our disgust when we turn to the opposite vice! But I will not ask you to consider it in itself; it is too revolting, too disgusting for me to speak of, and for you to hear of. It will be enough for us to consider how the Almighty has punished this vice at different times. "Devout Christian," vol. 2, chap. xvi. sec. 2, quest. 11.

[Describe these punishments so as to give the highest tragic effect, and use each to excite horror for the vice in question.]

4thly. The premature deaths which result from the vice of impurity. Physicians say, that more are killed by this vice, than by all the wars that happen in the world.

2. *Who are guilty of this vice, which has provoked such dreadful chastisements?* I will not defile my lips, nor shock your ears, even by the mention of the odious sins comprised under the head of the sixth Commandment. They are, alas! only too well understood by those who are guilty of them, and may they never be known by those who are innocent. But I will quote for you the words of Sacred Scripture. Holy Job says, xxxi. 1, and our Saviour Himself says, *Matt.* v. 27, 28.

From these words it follows, that as there are acts and as there are words, so likewise there are thoughts and desires against holy purity; and one can offend even in his heart against this angelic virtue; in other words, every thought wilfully and deliberately entertained, every desire deliberately formed, every design deliberately resolved upon, contrary to holy purity, is a mortal sin.

Here exclaim how many are in hell even for evil thoughts, evil desires, evil intentions.

3. *Immediate occasions to be avoided.* But it is not enough to avoid this vice itself, whether in thought, word, or act; it is necessary besides to avoid the immediate occasions of it.

[Here condemn immodest company, books, pictures, songs, &c.]

4. *Means of escaping this vice.*

See "Devout Christian," vol. 2, chap. xvi., sec. 2, quest. 17.

Conclusion.

Let me conclude this painful subject, and in doing so let me invoke your detestation once more against it.

Yes, the deluge, &c. Mention here the other facts, and say: These terrible calamities will live for ever in the memory of mankind. May they preserve you from the vice for which they have been inflicted, &c.

Consult Sermon of St. Liguori on this subject, together with Bishop Hay's "Devout Christian," as above referred to, &c.

THE SEVENTH COMMANDMENT OF GOD.

"*Thou shalt not steal.*"—EXOD. xx. 15.

INTRODUCTION.

The fifth Commandment of God regards injuries done to our neighbour in his person; and the seventh Commandment, expressed in the words I have quoted, relates to his property, and the injuries done him in his property. We see how careful the Almighty is of us in every respect. He fences us round about by his holy laws, so as to protect us, not only in person but also in our temporal possessions and rights. What reason have we not, therefore, to thank His divine providence, and the paternal concern He has for us in every way.

A word to bespeak attention, observing: That we are all concerned in this Commandment, inasmuch as we have property rights to be secured against wrong and injury from others, and are ourselves to withhold our hands from doing hurt or harm to the property or property rights of others: after which invoke a blessing.

BODY OF THE SUBJECT.

1. Show the unlawfulness of injuring our neighbour in his temporal possessions, property and rights. See Bishop Hay's "Devout Christian," vol. 2, chap. xvii.

Instead, however, of confining the considerations to theft alone, apply them to all the ways and means of doing wrong to our neighbour in his temporal concerns. *Ibid.*

2. Enumerate the various ways of doing wrong to our neighbour in his property or rights; premising, it is unnecessary to point out, rapine, by which one man seizes with violence the property of another, or puts him out of his rights by force or violence.

In laying down the various kinds of injustice, condemn each by a text of Scripture, or some reason against it, and observe, that those guilty of it are bound to restitution.

3. Inculcate the obligation of restitution. See *Ibid.* sec. 4, and quote example of Zacheus (*Luke* xix.), which relate in full.

CONCLUSION.

We have now before us the seventh of God's Commandments. We see how unlawful it is before God to injure our

neighbour in his temporal rights or concerns. Sum up the considerations. We have seen the various ways of doing him wrong, and we have been afforded an opportunity of seeing if we have been guilty in any of these ways; and, in conclusion, we have seen how those who have violated this Commandment are bound to restitution, &c.

Consult St. Liguori on the Commandments; Bishop Hay, and Theology on the Decalogue.

FIRST DISCOURSE ON

THE EIGHTH COMMANDMENT OF GOD.

"*Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.*"—EXOD. xx. 16.

INTRODUCTION.

The commandments belonging to the second Table, given by God to Moses on the mountain, regard principally our duties to our neighbour. The fifth Commandment forbids all wrong-doing to him in person. The seventh forbids all wrong-doing to him in his property, and the eighth, contained in the words quoted, forbids all wrong-doing to him in his character or reputation, &c.

A word on the importance of the subject, by saying:

That we generally make great account of injuring our neighbour in his person and property, but that the spirit of darkness has so blinded our understanding, that we make but little account of the harm we do him in his reputation. Let us, therefore, beg of the Father of lights, to enlighten us on this subject, that we may have correct ideas respecting it, &c.

BODY OF THE SUBJECT.

1. *Considerations.* 1st. Charity violated. Show how.
2ndly. Justice violated. Show how.
3rdly. Scripture texts bearing on the subject.

See Bishop Hay's "Devout Christian," vol. 2, chap. xviii. sec. 2.

2. *Various ways of injuring the character of our neighbour.* 1st, calumny; 2nd, detraction: 3rd, listening to either; 4th. tale-bearing; 5th, false or rash judgments.

Define each: adding a word of condemnation from Scripture. See "Challoner's Meditations," and "Devout Christian," vol. 2, chap. xviii. sec. 2.

3. *How to remedy injuries done to our neighbour in his character, and how to prevent this evil.*

1st. To take occasion of speaking well of those we have spoken ill of.

2ndly. Not to say in one's absence what we would not say before his face.

3rdly. When we have heard anything bad of any one, to let it die within us (*Eccli.* xix. 10-14). To prevent detraction in others, as far as possible, by charitable admonitions, by changing the conversation, by austere looks (*Prov.* xxv. 23).

Conclusion.

Sum up the considerations, and exhort to caution and circumspection, quoting St. James: "*If any man think himself to be religious, not bridling his tongue, but deceiving his own heart, this man's religion is vain.*" (*James* i. 26).

Consult as above; as also Theology on the Decalogue.

SECOND DISCOURSE ON
THE EIGHTH COMMANDMENT OF GOD.

LIES.

"*What is forbidden by the eighth Commandment? All false testimonies, rash judgments, and lies.*"

Introduction.

These are the words of the Catechism explaining the eighth Commandment. From them we learn that lies, or saying what is contrary to that which we know to be true, is an offence against this Commandment. It is to be feared this lesson is

not sufficiently impressed on the minds of many Christians, and it will not be amiss, therefore, to consider and examine our own conduct in reference to it.

[Beg attention.]

The God of Truth is present amongst us; let me, therefore, entreat your attention on His behalf, whilst I endeavour to convey to you His judgments and sentiments on a vice, which, as we shall see, is very hateful in His sight.

Body of the Subject.

1. *Considerations.* 1st. Lies are opposed to the end for which the Almighty gave us the gift of speech.

Enlarge upon this ennobling faculty by comparison with the dumb beast, also by calling attention to deaf mutes, who are such objects of pity. After which, ask:

Why did God give us this great gift of speech? and answer by saying: It was to speak to our neighbours in words the thoughts and sentiments of our minds, as they are in our minds. This is the end which God had in view, but the liar goes against this end of the Almighty, and lends his tongue to the devil, to speak, not according to his mind, but the very opposite, when he tells lies.

[Words of reprobation.]

2ndly. He is guilty of wrong-doing to his neighbour. When we speak to our neighbour, he has a right, according to the relations between man and man in society—he has a right, that we will not deceive him, but this right you violate by telling lies, &c.

3rdly. You bring disgrace upon yourself by telling lies. What greater reproach than to be called a liar, to have your neighbour say of you, "Don't believe a word he says," &c. Infer, therefore, that no man, having a regard for his own reputation, can make light of lie-telling.

4thly. What God says in His Sacred Scripture.

Here quote from Bishop Hay's "Devout Christian," vol. 2, chap. xviii. sec. 1, the more remarkable texts, and infer a lie is never lawful, *Ibid.* quest. 11. See also note to the life of St. Augustine, 28th August, by A. Butler, *versus finem.*

2. *Various kinds of lies.*

See *Ibid.;* and, after enumerating them, add: that whilst lies, simply as such, do not exceed the guilt of venial sin, still they may become mortal sins in certain cases. Mention cases, quest. 13, *Ibid.*

Conclusion.

We now see what lie-telling is. It is hateful to God. It is a violation of what we owe to our fellow-man in our social relations with him. It is ruinous to our own reputation. Nothing can excuse it; no amount of good that can be gained, no amount of evil that might be avoided. It is an essential evil. God can never permit it; and however little account men make of it, they can never go to heaven with its guilt on them, till expiated in the fire of purgatory.

Exhort to a detestation of this vice, and circumspection to avoid it.

Consult according to references *supra;* also Theology on the Decalogue.

THIRD DISCOURSE ON

THE EIGHTH COMMANDMENT OF GOD.

DISCIPLINE OF THE TONGUE

"If any man think himself to be religious, not bridling his tongue, but deceiving his own heart, this man's religion is vain."—James i. 26.

Introduction.

In considering the eighth Commandment, we have seen, that it is by the bad use men make of their tongues, that they offend chiefly against this Commandment. It therefore follows, that to secure its observance we must bridle our tongues; that is we must subject them to discipline, and keep them under constant restraint. This is an obligation so vital and essential, that if we do not attend to it, we should be deceiving ourselves, in fancying ourselvesreligious. The words of the Apostle are clear and decisive in

telling us so: "*If any man*," says St. James, "*think himself*," &c. What reasons have we not, therefore, to consider the restraint and discipline to which we are to subject ourselves in the use we are to make of our tongues; and need I ask your attention to the considerations which Christian morality presents to us on so important a subject. That we may derive advantage from these considerations, let us pray, that whilst my voice will reach your ears, the grace of the Most High may impress them upon your hearts, in order that you may avoid the multiplied sins, into which an unbridled tongue would be sure to betray us.

Body of the Subject.

Motives for restraining the tongue.

1. Quote various texts, with some words of comment on each, viz.: *Matt.* xii. 36, 37; *James* i. 19, 26; iii. 2, &c.

2. The influence of the tongue in our entire moral guidance. Show this from St. James iii. 2, 3, 4, where the Apostle compares it to a bridle in the governing a horse, and to a helm in the direction of a ship.

3. The great and extensive evil it is capable of doing. Compared in this respect to a fire (*James* iii. 5, 6). Show the comparison by a spark of fire setting a whole forest in flames, on one side, and the tongue, on the other, lighting up enmity, &c., between mankind; after which, dwell on the words (*a*) "*The tongue is a fire;*" (*b*) "*a world of iniquity;*" (*c*) "*placed among our members, which defileth the whole body;*" (*d*) "*inflaming the wheel of our nativity,*" *i.e.*, the whole course of our life from our very birth, or the time we become capable of using it; (*e*) "*being set on fire by hell.*"

4. The difficulty of restraining the tongue shown from comparison with beasts and birds and serpents, all of which can be tamed, and subjected to restraint, whereas "*the tongue no man can tame.*" (*James* iii. 8). Wherefore, the Apostle calls it "*an unquiet evil, full of deadly poison* (*Ibid.*), somewhat like a mad dog that cannot be tamed, and goes ahead spreading on all sides by his bite the deadly poison which has set him mad. Whence the Psalmist (*Ps.* xiii. 3), "*The poison of asps is under their lips.*"

5. How unnatural it is, lending itself, one time, to God to bless Him, and, at another, to the devil, to curse men made to the likeness of God. There is nothing in nature so strange and anomalous. A fountain sends forth only one kind of water, whereas, "*from the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing.* (*James* iii. 10, 11). Again, a fruit-tree yields only

one kind of fruit. If it be a fig-tree, it produces only figs, and not grapes as well, or if a vine, it produces grapes, and not figs at the same time, and, if the fountain be bitter, it cannot yield sweet water. In all these instances nature acts uniformly, the like producing the like, but the tongue is an exception to the order of nature, producing fruits and effects of different and opposite kinds. Oh! what reason have we not to say with the Apostle, "*My brethren, these things ought not to be*" (*Ibid.* 10), and to pray with the Psalmist, "*O Lord, deliver my soul from wicked lips, and a deceitful tongue.*" (*Ps.* cxix. 2).

From what kinds of words are we to restrain our tongues?

1st. From all words of irreverence towards God, His angels and saints, religion and holy things, towards persons devoted to the service of religion, as bishops, priests, &c., &c.

2ndly. From all words injurious to our neighbour, such as calumny, detraction, &c., as also from untruths of every kind.

3rdly. From words of vanity respecting ourselves in speaking of what we did, or said, having in view our own commendation or praise.

4thly. From all contentiousness, contradictions, and interruption of others in our conversation, and intercourse with them, as well as all retaliation on account of hurtful words, addressed to ourselves. (**Quote** 1 *Cor.* xi. 16, as also *Matt.* v. 11, 12).

5thly. From all raillery, bantering and pleasantry hurtful to the feelings of others.

6thly. From all frivolity and levity, mindful of our Saviour's words. (*Matt.* xii. 36).

Means for restraining and disciplining the tongue.

1st. To speak little, leaving the conversation very much to others, and taking part in it only as far as edification, politeness, and proper regard for others require. (**Quote** *James* i. 19; *Prov.* x. 19; "*Imitation of Christ*," Bk. I. chap. x. 1, 3, also chap. xx. 2).

2ndly. To observe circumspection, (*a*) as to the end or purpose of speaking; (*b*) the persons spoken to, the company in which we speak, and our own position with respect to such persons or company; (*c*) the time. (**Quote** *Eccl.* iii. 7; *Eccli.* xx. 7; xxi. 8).

3rdly. To pray with David, *Ps.* cxl. 3, and with Solomon, *Eccli.* xxii. 33, and take special account of our words in our

daily examination of conscience, as also in our examination before confession.

Conclusion.

Recapitulate the points, ending with an exhortation.

Consult Imitation of Christ, Bk. I, chaps. x. and xx.; Rodriguez, "Christian Perfection," vol. 2, second Treatise, chap. viii.; Bourdaloue's "Spiritual Retreat," on Conversations with our Neighbour.

Pious anecdote to be introduced wherever it may be judicious.

It is related of St. Pambo the hermit, who lived in the fourth century, that having left the world so very young, that he had not learned to read, he asked one of the hermits to teach him some Psalms, that he would recite by heart. The first lesson was the words, "*I said I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue,*" from the 38th Psalm. The holy youth was so struck with these words of Divine Wisdom, that he said, "that is enough for the present, and when I will have learned this first lesson, I shall come back for another." However, he did not return, and six months after the old hermit meeting him asked why he did not come to get a new lesson. "O," said Pambo, "I have not yet learned the lesson you have given me;" and later on in life he told a friend of his, that it had taken him nineteen years to master it. It was not the words merely he had to learn, nor even the sense and meaning of them, but he had to put in practice the lesson they contained, so as to bring his tongue under complete restraint, in such a way as to speak only when he had some useful occasion for speaking, and to speak then in such a manner as not to offend with his tongue, which, according to St. James, is the test and proof of a perfect man.

THE NINTH AND TENTH COMMANDMENTS OF GOD.

"*Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife.*"
"*Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's goods.*"—EXOD. XX. 17.

INTRODUCTION.

These words, so familiar to you all, announce the ninth and tenth Commandments of God. They forbid even the desire of what the sixth and seventh Commandments forbid in act and deed. There are many Christians who do not consider themselves guilty of a sin, unless they commit it by word or deed, taking no account of their inward thoughts or desires, although we are taught from our infancy, that sin is any wilful thought, as well as any wilful deed or word contrary to the law of God. This error is more general with respect to the sins against the sixth and seventh Commandments than those opposed to the others. Therefore, the Almighty, desirous that we should go to the source of the evil, adds the ninth and tenth Commandments, in order to meet the devil at the very threshold, so to say, of our soul, and reject his temptations by turning away our thoughts, desires, and intentions from them, so as to withhold all consent from them in the interior of our souls.

[Bespeak attention, and invoke a blessing.]

See, therefore, the importance of the subject before us. How many are led every day into sin because they do not watch over their interior. How often have we ourselves sinned for want of this vigilance over the inward workings of our souls? Give me, therefore, your best attention on so important a subject, and let us beg the Father of lights, from whom every good and perfect gift descends, &c.

BODY OF THE SUBJECT.

1. *Considerations.*

1st. It is of the utmost importance, in the first place, to be convinced of the truth, that sin, as well as virtue, is a thing of the soul, and that it is the soul that is guilty, not the members

of our body, by which the sin is outwardly committed. The members are only the instruments the soul or mind makes use of, and are no more guilty than the weapon the sinner takes in hand for the commission of an evil deed. For example, an assassin uses a sword to commit murder, and he wields the sword with his hand. It is not the sword evidently that is guilty, nor the hand either, but it is the mind or soul of the assassin, which directs and orders both hand and sword. And at what moment did the mind become guilty? At the time the deed was actually committed? No, but the moment that the mind had consented to it, or resolved upon it. And this is so true, that if any obstacle had occurred to prevent him from the execution of the terrible deed, he would still be guilty of the awful crime of murder in his heart. This will be made clear by an example—the example of the rebel angels. They committed no act of rebellion, but they only conceived the thought or design: "*I will ascend into heaven*," said Lucifer, "*I will exalt my throne above the stars of God, I will sit on the mountain of the covenant, and I will be like to the Most High.*" (*Isai.* xiv. 13, 14). Observe, he speaks all along in the future tense, "*I will.*" He had only the thought or intention, yet he was guilty of the crime of high treason against God; and immediately the hand of God fell upon him, and hurled him and his rebellious associates into the abyss of hell. St. James says, "*Every one is tempted by his own concupiscence: Then when concupiscence hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin.*" (*James* i. 14). There are several stages in sin, which it is important to distinguish. 1st. There is the suggestion; 2ndly, the advertence; 3rdly, pleasure; 4thly, consent by desire or intention; and 5thly, the execution or perpetration of the sinful deed. Now, in which of these stages does concupiscence bring forth sin? When the deed is perpetrated? No; before that, at the moment when the mind desired, or consented to, the evil deed. Thus we see how sin is a thing of the mind, and we understand our Saviour's words, when He says, "*from the heart come forth evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false testimonies, blasphemies,*" *&c.* (*Matt.* xv. 19). Yes, the heart is the fountain, and as the water that flows on is the water of the fountain, so are the various sins man commits the sins of the heart or mind, because they proceed from it as from a fountain. **Lament** how little this great truth is known, and how many are guilty of grievous sins, who, notwithstanding, think themselves

innocent, because they did not commit them by exterior acts. On this account, St. Paul warns us all, that when we shall stand before the tribunal of God to be judged, He will bring to light the hidden things of darkness and make manifest the counsels, that is, the thoughts, desires, or intentions, that will have lain lurking within the recesses of our hearts (1 *Cor.* iv. 5).

2ndly. It is highly important, in the second place, to be convinced, that with regard to the sins forbidden by the sixth and seventh Commandments, more than any others, we are liable to be guilty in our interior by thoughts and desires. Hence, the Almighty has given us two distinct Commandments, against those thoughts or desires, viz.: the ninth Commandment, which says, "*Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife*," and the tenth which says, "*Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's goods.*" Hence it was that holy Job said, "*I have made a covenant with my eyes that I would not so much as think of a virgin.*" (xxxi. 1). Observe the caution of the holy man over his thoughts, fearing that even in thought he would be guilty. And our Divine Lord is still more distinct, when He says in the Gospel, "*Whosoever shall look on a woman to lust after her, hath already committed adultery with her in his heart.*' (*Matt.* v. 28). Oh! how many sins are committed in this way in the secret of the heart. No human being knows anything about them; but the pure eyes of the Almighty behold them, and will one day bring them to light. Oh! if David had resisted the desires of his heart, what tears, what sighs, what lamentations should he not have been spared.

In the same way are men betrayed by the desires they allow themselves to conceive of the good things of the world. They see what pleases them, the desire of having it sets in, and neither the consideration of charity nor justice is any barrier to their desires. On this account the Apostle says of those desires, that "*they drown men into destruction and perdition. For the desire of money is the root of all evils, which some coveting have erred from the faith, and have entangled themselves in many sorrows.*" (1 *Tim.* vi. 9, 10). (Quote example of Eve, *Gen.* iii. 6).

3rdly. It is all the more incumbent on us to repress the desires forbidden by the ninth and tenth Commandments, inasmuch as the evils are fearful to which they lead when not repressed. When the fire is lit up, it will burn all before it, and it will stop its ravages only when it ceases to have ignitible matter to prey upon. The history of all nations abounds with

dreadful examples of all sorts of excesses, jealousies, hatreds, murders, wars, rebellions against the Church, even heresies and schisms, which have had their origin in the unjust desires which are forbidden by the ninth and tenth Commandments. Is not the great rebellion of the sixteenth century against the Church, in every country, and more especially in England, the outcome of this accursed source? And as to the desires of having and enjoying the good things of this life, when allowed free scope, do they not grow into a passion, so that the unhappy beings who are its victims, cannot restrain their hands, whenever they have the opportunity, from the property of their neighbours, not only in their want, but even in their abundance? (See "Devout Christian," vol. 2, chap. xvii. sec. 3).

2. *How to distinguish evil desires that are sinful from those that are not so.*

Lay great stress on this point, as there is danger on one side of being led into great embarrassment of mind and conscience by scrupulosity, whilst there is greater danger on the other side of offending the Almighty by laxity in our ideas on this subject.

First of all, therefore, we should hold fast to the principle, that mere temptations are not sins, but, on the contrary, give us great occasion of practising the opposite virtues, and thereby of acquiring merit, when we resist and overcome them.

In the second place, we are to bear in mind that the more violent they are, and the longer they continue, the greater will be our merit, when we persevere in resisting them.

In the third place, we have always the grace afforded us by God necessary to aid us in the struggle, in order to bring us off victorious. We have His own promise to that effect: "*God is faithful*," says St. Paul, "*who will not allow you to be tempted above that which you are able.*" (1 *Cor.* x. 13).

In the fourth place, we are never overcome till we yield our own consent to the temptation, and wish to be guilty of the sin to which we are tempted. In one word, all depends on consent. Refuse it, there is no sin, however violent the temptation. Yield your consent, you are guilty of sin, though no sinful act follows. We have already noticed the several stages in sin: 1st, the sinful suggestion, by which the evil deed is brought before the mind by the temptation: 2ndly, our notice of the suggestion; 3rdly, pleasure in thinking on the thing suggested; 4thly, consent; 5thly, commission. In the suggestion there is no sin,

because it is not in our power to prevent it. In noticing the suggestion there is no sin either, as this also we cannot help, any more than we can prevent ourselves seeing what comes before our eyes as we walk abroad. But we should turn away our minds from thinking of it, when we find it taking any hold of the mind. But a feeling of pleasure may set in after the evil suggestion, and it is here that the real danger comes on, because consent is the next thing, and it is difficult to discern the dividing line between one and the other. Hence there should not be an instant of delay in repressing all feeling of pleasure, for fear of being carried beyond the fatal boundary. If unhappily consent follow, here alas! what has been a temptation so far, is now formal and accomplished sin within the soul. Everything, therefore, as we have observed, depends on consent. Let us keep those points in our mind, and we shall, with God's grace, avoid the extremes we have adverted to, scrupulosity on one side and laxity on the other.

3. It only remains that I should point out to you the occasions of these sinful thoughts and desires. Happily, the Catechism makes this an easy thing for me. I have only to repeat the question and answer as put forth in the Catechism.

[Ask what are the immediate occasions, &c., repeating the question, and answering it:]

Besides avoiding these occasions, there are also certain means of a more positive nature we are to employ, in order to resist and overcome evil thoughts.

See Bishop Hay's "Devout Christian," vol. 2, chaps. xvii. and xix.

Conclusion.

Exhort to have constant recourse to these means, assuring your hearers, if they do, they may hope to realize the blessing of the Apostle, which you wish them from your heart: "*That the peace of God, which surpasseth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.*"

Consult Bishop Hay's "Devout Christian," as above referred to; also Theology and Guillet's "Projets d'Instructions," lvi. Inst.

THE COMMANDMENTS OF GOD

IN GENERAL,

AS COMPRISED IN THE TWO GREAT PRECEPTS OF

LOVING GOD AND OUR NEIGHBOUR.

THE LOVE OF GOD.

"*Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with thy whole mind. This is the greatest and the first Commandment. And the Second is like to this: Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two Commandments depend the whole law and the prophets.*"—MATT. xxii. 37, 38, 39, 40.

INTRODUCTION.

We have treated of the Ten Commandments of God, one after another in detail, observing what is commanded, and what is forbidden by each. We saw they are divided into two classes, as they were originally written on two Tables or slabs of stone by the finger of God, and delivered to Moses. The first Table contained the first three, which immediately relate to God Himself, and the second contained the remaining seven which relate immediately to our neighbour.

God and our neighbour being, therefore, the objects of these Commandments, it follows, that if we love God and our neighbour, we shall observe our duties in their regard, since, according to nature, the most powerful motive of duty is love. On this account, our Blessed Saviour would summarize the whole of the Ten Commandments under the two precepts of loving God and our neighbour, telling us in express words that on them "*depend the whole law and the prophets,*" and, therefore, too, our Catechism asks the question: "*To how many Commandments may the Ten Commandments be reduced?*" and answers: "*To these two principal Commandments, which are,*" *&c.* (Recite fully). Consequently, as these two Precepts of loving God and our neighbour insure the observance of all the Commandments, it is of the highest importance to have them always before our minds, and to understand them thoroughly, that we may faithfully comply with the duties they require, and thereby fulfil the entire law of the Commandments.

We shall consider the Precept of the love of God in the first place, reserving the Precept respecting the neighbour for a separate subject. Behold, then, our present subject, the Love of God. Can anything be more high or holy?

[Let us, therefore, dispose ourselves to enter, with the Divine assistance, upon the subject, invoking, &c.]

BODY OF THE SUBJECT.

1. *Motives.*

First motive: It is the greatest privilege to be allowed to love Him. A few words on His dignity, His greatness, His infinite Majesty: whereupon *conclude*, that, apart from any Commandment, we should conceive it the greatest privilege to be allowed to love Him.

Second motive: His Amiability. Draw out this by saying we are naturally formed to love what is perfect. As the magnet, or loadstone, draws things to itself, and as these things of themselves follow this attraction, so what is perfect attracts the human heart to itself, and the human heart follows this attraction.

Example of a mere human being, who is known to be not only exempt from fault, as far as poor human nature can be so, but also possessed of eminent virtues; is kind, affable, charitable, beneficent, &c. Every one loves such a one. Apply the example to God, and draw your conclusion.

Hence, St. Augustine, feeling how we should love God on account of this infinite amiability, and how we should consider it the highest privilege to be allowed to do so, felt it to be a subject of deep humiliation to be commanded to love Him, as if, without this Commandment, our nature being so perverse, we should fail in so great a duty.

Third motive: The Commandment. But we must acknowledge our depravity, and that we do require to be commanded to love God, and, therefore, God does command us in the most formal way and by repeated injunctions, and under the penalty of everlasting death, to love Him.

Here quote a few strong texts, as you will find them in the "Concordantia Scripturarum," and draw your conclusion.

Fourth motive. Gratitude, returning love for love. This motive is represented to us by St. John (1 *John* iv. 19). Here make a rapid recital of all He has done for us, without any necessity or

advantage on His part, but from His own spontaneous love for us, in the order of grace for our souls, in the order of nature for our bodies, so that whatever we are, in every way, that we are by the bounty of Him, "*in whom we live, move, and have our being.*" (*Acts* xvii. 28).

2. *What we are to avoid in virtue of the Precept.* Introduce the point by saying that the love of God has its negative side and its positive side; that is, it points to the things we are to avoid and duties we are to perform; just as to maintain fire we must not only keep away from it what would extinguish it, but supply it with fuel to keep it from being spent out of itself.

The things we are to avoid.

1st. To admit nothing into our hearts contrary to the love of God. He demands our whole heart, &c. Quote St. Francis de Sales: "If I thought there was the least affection in my heart that did not belong to God, I would use every violence to myself to tear it out." However, we are allowed, nay commanded also, to love our neighbour; but, as we will see, when speaking of the love of our neighbour, we must love him in God, and for God, &c.

2ndly. We must avoid everything in thought, word, or deed, that would offend Him, however great and pressing may be the motive to the contrary. (Quote *Matt.* x. 37.) Example of St. Clement, Bishop of Ancyra: The Emperor Diocletian placed before him all the instruments of martyrdom to terrify him, and on the other side a large quantity of gold, silver and precious stones to allure him, and said to the saint: "Make your choice: if you persist in loving your God see the death that awaits you; but if you deny Him, all the riches you see before you shall be yours." The martyr, drawing a deep and indignant sigh, protested with the Apostle, that "*neither death nor life,*" &c. (*Rom.* viii. 38). Also example of Sir T. More. When conjured by his wife, by his love for her, for his family, for his own life, to act against his conscience, he replied: "My dear wife, how many years should I live still, were I to do what you ask?" "Perhaps twenty or thirty," was her reply; whereupon he said: "Alas! is it for twenty or thirty years more of life I should consign myself to everlasting death?" &c.

3. *What we are to do in virtue of this Precept.*

1st. To maintain ourselves in a constant state of grace. (1 *Cor.* xiii. 1, &c).

2ndly. To refer all our thoughts, words and actions to Him as to our Supreme Lord and Master (1 *Cor.* x. 31, *et sqq.*)

Explain how this is done by the oblation at morning prayers, and renewing the oblation during the day, especially before our principal actions. **Recommend** pious ejaculations, giving some examples.

3rdly. Positive and formal acts of charity from time to time.

Suggest short acts and **recommend** them, especially when one is tempted to sin, and at the approach of death. Recommend also to parents to train their children, when they are reaching the use of reason, frequently to lift up their hearts to God with acts of love.

4thly. The observance of God's Commandments. (*John* xv. 10; xiv. 15, 21; 1 *John* ii. 4; v. 2, 3, 6; 2 *John* i. 6). **Whence infer** how the love of God insures the observance of His Commandments, especially those that relate to Himself, **saying**, if we love God, we will make Him our Sovereign Lord and Master; we will adore, honour, and worship Him with all the powers of our souls.

Here go through, in a rapid manner, what is commanded and what forbidden by the three first Commandments, to show how the love of God guarantees the observance of the former and the avoidance of the latter.

Conclusion.

Recapitulate the points, adding some words of exhortation to the love of God, ending with the words of St. Paul: "*Who therefore shall separate us, &c.* (*Rom.* viii. 35, *et sqq.*)

Consult Guillet's "Projets d'Instructions," lxiv.; "Challoner's Meditations;" and Bishop Hay's "Devout Christian," vol. 1, chap. lx.

THE LOVE OF OUR NEIGHBOUR.

"*This is my Commandment, that you love one another, as I have loved you.*"—John xv. 12.

Introduction.

We have seen in our last discourse how the entire Law and the Prophets, according to the express words of our Divine Lord, depend on the observance of the two great Precepts of charity or love—charity or love, in the first place, towards

God, and charity or love, in the second place, towards our neighbour; and that, consequently, these two Precepts do guarantee the fulfilment of the Ten Commandments; and that these latter may be all reduced to them. We inferred, therefore, how important these Precepts are; and, having treated of the love of God, we proceed, in God's name, to treat this evening the love of our neighbour.

[A few words inviting attention, and a short invocation.]

BODY OF THE SUBJECT.

1. *Motives for loving our neighbour.*

First motive: the natural law. State how the Almighty has written upon the heart of every human being the law, that he is to love his neighbour as himself, that he is to do nothing to his neighbour, that he would be unwilling his neighbour should do to him; and that he would do to his neighbour what he would reasonably wish his neighbour, under similar circumstances, to do to him. Observe, how mankind have felt and recognized this law from the beginning of the world, in all climes and countries, in all the differences in which they might otherwise differ, &c.; and conclude, that man should change his very nature to ignore this law of love for his fellow-creature.

Second motive: The positive law of God.

Quote a few strong texts, as you will find them in the "Concordantia S. S. Scripturæ."

Third motive: It is a branch of the love of God, springing from the same root or motive, so that it is God and for God, we love our neighbour. (1 *John* iv. 20, 21).

God makes the love of our neighbour so much the same as the love of Himself, that He takes as done to Himself what we do to our neighbour (*Zach.* ii. 8; *Matt.* xxv.), where our eternal destiny is made to depend upon the Precept of fraternal charity, the Supreme Judge taking as done or denied to Himself what we shall have done or denied to our neighbour. Quote from verse 35 to end of chapter.

Fourth motive: The special precept of Christianity.

Quote text, laying special stress on "*My;*" also *John* xiii. 34, laying stress on the word "*new;*" *John* xvii. 20, 21, 22, 23; showing that the observance of fraternal charity amongst Christians was to be the testimony of the Christian religion being Divine, and that Christ

Himself is the Son of God, sent by Him into this world. Quote accordingly 1 *John* iii. 10, 11; and recite what St. Jerome says of St. John, as follows:

Towards the end of his life, when no longer able to walk, he used to have himself carried into the church to preach to his people, and that his sermon consisted of these words: "My dear little children, love one another;" and when his attendants observed to him that he said so little, and always repeated the same words, he replied, giving them an answer worthy, as St. Jerome remarks, of the great Apostle of Charity: "This is the Commandment of the Lord, and if this be done everything else will be done."

Refer to Acts of the Apostles, iv. 32, &c., and adduce the allegory of St. Paul, 1 *Cor.* xii. 12, *et seq.*

Recite the fact of St. Pachomius, when yet a pagan, and serving in the army of Constantine the Great, how, arriving with his men in a town, the inhabitants supplied him with all kinds of provisions with such alacrity that, wondering, he asked who they were, and was answered they were Christians, who, according to the spirit and teaching of their religion, acted in that way towards their fellow-men. Whereupon, he held up his hands to call God to witness, that from that moment he embraced their religion.

Conclude this point by saying, that thus the virtue of fraternal charity is not merely a virtue of Christianity, but so prominent as to be a distinctive mark to all mankind, pagans as well as Christians themselves, that Christianity is a religion from heaven, having this seal of its Divinity set upon it by its Divine Founder.

2. *In what the precept consists.* It requires the following conditions:—

1st. That our love for our neighbour be interior, having its seat in the heart, and proceeding from the heart, &c.

2ndly. That it be supernatural, as a branch of the love of God, which "*is poured forth into our hearts by the Holy Ghost, who is given us.*" (*Rom.* v. 5). It must be also supernatural in its motive, making us look upon our fellow-being as a brother descended of the same parent, made to the image and likeness of his Creator, and a fellow-member with us in the mystic body of Jesus Christ.

3rdly. It must be practical and effective, not confined to

sentiments or expression, but exercised in acts and deeds. Quote *James*, ii. 15.

4thly. That it be universal, embracing all mankind, even our enemies. Quote *Matt.* v. 44.

[A few words to exhort your audience to a charity having these conditions, or an invitation to examine if their charity have such conditions.]

3. *How it is practised.* 1st. By doing to our neighbour all that we would reasonably wish him to do to us under similar circumstances, and to refrain from doing towards him what we would not like him to do to us. This is a primary dictate of the natural law, enforced also by the positive law of God. Quote *Luke* vi. 31 ; *Tob.* iv. 16. Mingling our joys and sorrows with each other (*Rom.* xii. 15).

2ndly. To practise the works of charity and mercy according to occasion (*James* i. 27, which quote).

Recite the Works of Mercy, first the spiritual and then the corporal, saying a passing word on each, and enforcing it by a text of Scripture, for which see "Concordantia S. S. Scripturæ," In mentioning each work, it would be well to exemplify it in a practical case. With respect to the corporal works, you may ask the question in the end:

Is it to be expected of the poor to exercise these works? and this, in order to state, that *they* are an example to the rich in helping each other, so as to share the last necessaries of life in such a way as that the poor would perish, if it were not for the poor ; that is, if it were not for the succour they receive from their poor neighbours, who themselves have not food for to-morrow, who have only the clothes they are actually wearing to cover their limbs, &c. Will they not rise up in judgment against the rich on the last day?

Conclusion.

Recapitulate the points, and exhort to the practice of works of charity, stating that our judgment for an eternity of weal or woe is to depend upon the fulfilment of this great precept, quoting *Matt.* xxv. 34, 40.

Consult "Projets d'Instructions," par M. Guillet. lxv. lxvi. Insts.; Bishop Hay's "Devout Christian," vol. 2, chap. xiii. and also Theology on the Decalogue.

THE COMMANDMENTS OF GOD IN GENERAL.

CONCLUDING DISCOURSE.

"*Thou hast commanded Thy Commandments to be kept most diligently.*"
Ps. cxviii. 4.

Introduction.

We have reviewed the whole series of the Ten Commandments. We have considered them in order and in particular, one after another. We have seen their obligations, both as to what they command and what they forbid; and, remembering all through that it is God Who speaks in them, we listened with docility and reverence, giving Him our understandings to be enlightened, and our hearts to be moved by His Divine grace, Who, when He orders us, is present to us, "*to work in us*" at the same time, according to the words of the Apostle, "*both to will and accomplish, according to His good will.*" (*Phil.* ii. 13).

After having thus treated the Commandments in detail, it will be useful to look back upon them in a general view, in order to make some reflections applicable to them all at large.

Need I invite your attention to a subject of such grave importance? I am sure its importance is of itself a sufficient motive to awaken the most lively interest in your souls. Let us, therefore, lift up our hearts on high, &c.

Body of the Subject.

1. *We are to keep always in view the origin from which the Commandments emanate.*

Not from a human origin, such as parliaments or legislative bodies, whatever authority they may possess in this world, and in the order of Providence; nor even from the authority of the Church, though otherwise in charge of our souls, to conduct us to our final destiny; they proceed from God immediately.

[Here relate briefly their history, *Exod.* xix. xx.]

2. *All and each possible.*

Mention and reprobate the errors of Luther and the Jansenists, showing the blasphemy they involved making God a tyrant. Notice that no lawgiver enacts a law impossible to observe; no superior issues a mandate impossible to execute; no father imposes a duty impossible to fulfil; and infer, *a fortiori*, that God cannot order us anything above or beyond our strength. Quote texts of Scripture, referred to in Council of Trent, sess. vi. chap. xi., and canon xviii. Quote especially *Deut.* xxx. 11, 12, 13.

3. *To be observed all and each.*

Quote and explain *Matt.* xix. 17, where no exception is made. Quote also *James* ii. 10, and expose the delusion of those who, being good, and observant of God's Commandments in many respects, take credit to themselves for what they do, as if the violation of one single Commandment were not sufficient for their damnation. Refer to the parable of the Pharisee and Publican, *Luke* xviii.; and the example in the *Apoc.* iii. 17.

4. *Their observance to be supernatural.*

To be so first, by being referred to God, He being our first Beginning and last End, &c.; enlarge. See Bourdaloue's "Spiritual Retreat" on the end of man. 2ndly. By springing from Divine grace in the soul. Mention and reprobate Pelagian heresy, as to grace not being necessary for salvation. See Council of Trent, sess. vi., chap. v., can. 1 & 3, same sess. Quote parable, *John* xv., and comment upon it. Quote also 2 *Cor.* iii. 5, and infer the necessity of continual prayer for grace.

5. *Necessity to be in a state of grace, that our observance of the Commandments be meritorious.*

Quote 1 *Cor.* xiii. 1, 2, 3, and comment thereon. See Council of Trent, sess. vi., chap. xvi.: and lament the condition of those who rise from time to time out of a state of sin to a state of grace, and soon fall back into sin again. Observe, however, that even in a state of sin, their observance of the Commandments is always obligatory, and that they serve to obtain for sinners the mercy of God in order to their return to grace; adding, that all the time there is no merit for sinners.

6. *Perseverance.*

Quote *Matt.* x. 22; and show, that as a vessel, after having made a long voyage, may perish in sight of the harbour, so, &c. *Therefore*, *Phil.* ii. 12: *Eccles.* v. 5.

7. *They are to be always kept in view for the guidance of our conduct through life.*

Quote *Deut.* xi. 18, 19, 20. Apply the passage by recommending

the recital of the Commandments at night or morning prayers; by making the Commandments the motive of one's conduct, in doing what we do, and avoiding what we decline doing: by parents admonishing their children, by constant reference to the Commandments. Refer to *Tobias* xiv.; and recommend the example to parents for a farewell address to their children.

Conclusion.

Recite the example, *Matt.* xix. 16, 17, 18, 19, and hold out the promise therein as a motive for observing the Commandments, and, as our text says, observing them "*most diligently*," in the various ways laid down.

N.B.—Intersperse pious reflections and appeals, particularly at the close of each point.

Consult Theology, "de Actibus Humanis, de Gratia de Merito."

THE PRECEPTS OF THE CHURCH IN GENERAL.

"*If he will not hear the Church, let him be to thee as the heathen and publican.*"—Matt. xviii. 17.

Introduction.

Our Divine Saviour came on earth, as He Himself says, that we might have life, and have it more abundantly. Therefore, He not only laid down His life, and spilt His blood, for our ransom, but He instituted a Church, or a society, to conduct us to everlasting life. As we look back on the institution and formation of this great work, we see how He selected from amongst his followers twelve men, to whom He gave the name of Apostles, or persons sent; that, in accordance with this title, He sent them to teach and propagate His religion throughout the world, promising that He Himself, and His Holy Spirit, would be with them and their successors to the end of time; that He made one of them the Rock and Foundation on which He was to build His Church, entrusting to him in a special way the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, and appointing him Supreme Pastor, not only of the lambs, but also of the sheep, of His fold; that after the Apostles, He appointed seventy-two

other disciples to aid them in their ministry; that this little flock increased after the Ascension of our Divine Lord, so as to spread over the world, bearing down every obstacle in its progress, and continuing its existence throughout the lapse of ages to the present hour. We see this Society or Church consisting, like all other human societies, of governors, and of the governed; the governors having authority to rule the governed by rules and regulations, having for object the end and purpose for which the Church was instituted, namely, to conduct mankind to salvation. These laws and regulations are very numerous, as may well be supposed in a Society which has already lasted nigh 1900 years, and is so diversified in its constitution and government. But from amongst these laws there are six that stand forth more prominently than the rest, and are presented to us in a popular or general sense, as *the* Precepts of the Church. They are—(**Here repeat them, and go on to say**): that desiring to speak of them singly, and in order, you wish to preface them by some general observations applicable to them all alike, and which you propose making the subject of the present instruction.

[**Invite attention,** and make a short invocation.]

Body of the Subject.

1. *Motives for observing the Precepts of the Church.*

First motive: From the governing power, invested in the Church as a society. **Observe** that the Church is a society, and, like every other society, she must possess within herself powers of government to carry out the end of her institution. There never was, and never will be, a society without such a power. The bare idea of a kingdom, a city, or even a family, without government authority, presents to our minds the accompanying ideas of disorder, confusion, desolation, extinction. This is the state in which God placed us in creating us to live in society. Hence St. Paul, *Rom.* xiii. 1, 2; and St. Peter, 1 *Epis.* ii. 13, *apply* to the Church *as a society.*

Second motive: From the governing power with which she is specially invested by the positive ordination of her Divine Founder, our Lord Jesus Christ.

See "Challoner's Meditations," Oct. 17th, *First Consideration;* also Treatise on the Church; and infer, that to disobey the Church is to disobey her Divine Founder, &c.

Third motive: That the Precepts of the Church are grounded on the divine and natural law, and the Church only applies these laws in her Precepts in order to secure their observance.

See Challoner, *ibid.*, *Second Consideration;* also the Church Treatise; and exemplify the point in some of the Precepts themselves.

Fourth motive: Gratitude for being members of the Church. **Show this,** by stating how great a blessing it is to belong to the Church; that, as there is but one name, and no other under heaven, given to men whereby we must be saved, so, likewise, there is but one Church wherein this salvation is attainable; that Christ our Saviour instituted but one; that His Apostles propagated but one Church, to which "*the Lord daily added,*" as St. Luke says, "*such as should be saved*" (*Acts* ii. 47); or, as he says again, "*as many as were ordained to life everlasting*" (*Acts* xiii. 48); out of which, as St. Cyprian affirms, we can no more hope for salvation than those who were out of the ark of Noah could hope to escape the deluge; and we cannot have God for our Father unless we have the Church for our Mother. What a blessing, therefore, to belong to the one true Church! **Go on to show,** that we could not have merited this blessing ourselves; that it has come from God; that God was in no manner bound to confer it upon us; that it has come from His own spontaneous bounty; that we might have been born amongst heathens and idolaters, amongst heretics and schismatics, and that, therefore, it is a blessing of predilection, or preference, &c. What gratitude, therefore, do we owe God for so great a blessing! How monstrous, consequently, the ingratitude of disregarding the authority and laws of the Church!

Apply the words, "*Woe to thee, Corozain,*" *&c.*, *Matt.* xi. 21, 22, 23; and infer that the judgment awaiting the disobedient members of the Church is more dreadful than that reserved for those outside. Quote *Matt.* x. 15; xii. 41, 42.

2. *In what the governing power of the Church consists.*

1st. In her power to make laws. This is essential to her as a society, having a government to exercise in respect of her subjects. She is directly invested with this power by her Divine Founder. **Quote** *Matt.* xvi. 19; *John* xxi. 17; 1 *Peter* v. 2, and **add:** that she has exercised this power from the beginning, and hence the multiplied laws and precepts which,

enacted from age to age, constitute what is known as the Canon Law.

2ndly. In her power of administration. Legislation is of little avail, without an executive administration to carry it into effect. We, therefore, have in the Church a complete and elaborate administrative system, consisting of the Pope, as Supreme Head on earth, with his Cardinals, Patriarchs, Primates, Archbishops, Bishops, with their respective jurisdictions fixing and regulating the exercise of their administrative authority, to enforce her legislation by penalties, if necessary. (**Quote** *Matt.* xviii. 15; 1 *Cor.* v. 5; 1 *Tim.* i. 20); **adding,** the constant practice of the Church. **Observe,** that this power of punishment for the infraction of her laws is chiefly of a spiritual nature, affecting the souls of the criminals; and that it is, therefore, more dreadful than chains or dungeons, or any punishment inflicted on the body. **Quote** Tertullian, saying of excommunication, "that it is the most certain forerunner of a future judgment;" the Council of Meaux, "that it is the condemnation of eternal death;" the Council of Trent, "that it is the nerve or strength of ecclesiastical discipline;" and finally, St. Augustine, "that it is more dreadful than to be struck with the sword, than to be consumed by flames, or thrown to wild beasts." These expressions may appear exaggerated to some, but it is only to carnal men, who accordingly, cannot, or will not, understand spiritual things; who will not see that the soul is infinitely more precious than the body, eternal life infinitely more precious than this miserable mortal life; and that, therefore, according to the words of our Divine Lord, we are to fear not those punishments which can kill the body and do no more, but rather those that destroy both body and soul into hell.

3. *In whom the governing power of the Church is vested.*

1st. In the Pope. As successor of St. Peter, he inherits his prerogatives from him, and, therefore, we are to take all the words addressed to St. Peter, in his character of Head of the Church, as addressed to every Pope succeeding him. **Quote** *Matt.* xvi. 18; *John* xxi. 15; and **point out** how Peter is always named first among the Apostles; answers in their name; appears foremost in so many various transactions (*Acts* i. 15; ii. 14; iv. 19); opens the door to the Gentiles in the person of Cornelius (*Acts* x.); speaks as President of the Council of Jerusalem (*Acts* xv.) **Infer,** the position of the Pope gives

him a supremacy not only of rank, but of official director and governor over the whole Church, pastors and faithful, and quote Council of Florence: "We define, that the Holy Apostolic See, and the Roman Pontiff, holds the primacy over the whole world; that the Roman Pontiff himself is successor to St. Peter, Prince of the Apostles, the true Vicar of Christ, the Head of the entire Church, the Father and Doctor of all Christians, and that to him was given, in the Blessed Peter, full power by our Lord Jesus Christ of feeding, ruling, and governing the universal Church."

2ndly. In the Bishops, according to their respective jurisdictions as Patriarchs, Primates, Archbishops or Bishops. Of them all, St. Paul says, that the Holy Ghost placed them in their position to rule the Church of God. (Quote *Acts* xx. 28).

3rdly. In the Bishops as they are assembled in General Council. Here especially they are under the direction of the Divine Spirit. Hence, in the first General Council, that of Jerusalem, the Apostles put forth their legislation in the name of the Holy Ghost. (Quote *Acts* xv. 28).

Conclusion.

Recapitulate the several points. **Infer,** that there is no authority on earth more venerable than that of the Church; that we are, therefore, to cherish the greatest respect for her laws, and that we should regulate our lives in strict accordance with them, recollecting the words of our Divine Lord, that, hearing the pastors of the Church, we hear Him, that not hearing them, we are guilty of not hearing Him, and he that will not hear the Church, though being within her pale, is, in the eyes of God, as a heathen and a publican, &c.

Consult Theology, Church Treatise; also Guillet's "Projets d'Instructions," lvii. Inst., and Bishop Hay's "Sincere Christian," vol. 1, chap. xv.

FIRST PRECEPT OF THE CHURCH.

"To hear Mass on Sundays and all Holidays of obligation."

Introduction.

Refer to previous instruction, and recapitulate the chief points, after which say, we proceed to treat of these Precepts singly, and in order, beginning with the first as announced in the text.

A word or two on its importance, observing that it is placed at the head of the others, and rightly so, because it relates immediately to the service of God and His worship.

[A short invocation.]

Body of the Subject.

1. *Considerations.*

1st. Repeat Precept, and observe, that it is dictated in part by the natural law, and in part by the Divine law, and finally fixed and determined by the Church; dictated by the natural law, because, even though the Divine law and the Church were silent, still a natural sense of obligation towards God would urge us to give Him some of our time, in worshipping Him, in adoring Him, &c.; dictated also by the Divine law, because God ordained, by positive precept in the Old Law, that one day in every week, and several days throughout the year besides, should be consecrated to His service and worship. Finally, it was the Church that fixed and determined for us the observance of Sundays and Holidays according to our present obligations.

2ndly. As regards the Sunday, it is the change from Saturday, the weekly Sabbath Day of the Jews in the Old Law, to Sunday, which we call the Christian Sabbath, for, according to St. Paul, "*the priesthood being translated, it was necessary that a translation also be made of the law*" (*Heb.* vii. 12); that is, the priesthood of Aaron, or of the Old Law, having ceased, in order to give room to the Christian priesthood, a change should also take place in the public worship of God; and, amongst many other things, this change brought with it a transfer of the Sabbath from Saturday, the last day of the week, to Sunday, the first. (Quote *Catechism of Council of Trent*, part iii. chap. iv. sect. 25.) Also, St. Leo the Great: "This day, Sunday, is consecrated by such great mysteries of Divine appointment, that whatever has been

constituted by God as especially wonderful, has been effected on this day. On this day the world took its beginning; on this day, by the Resurrection of Christ, death met its end, and life its commencement; on this day the Apostles received orders to preach the Gospel to the whole world; on this day they received power of forgiving sin; on this day the Holy Ghost, as promised by our Divine Lord, came, and so the Gospel law was published on the day of Pentecost." (*Serm.* p. 361, *in fine*). Infer, that, although not exactly of Divine institution, as is generally thought, the appointment of Sunday, to supersede the Saturday Sabbath of the Old Law, is at least of Apostolic origin, judging according to the rule laid down by St. Augustine, "that what the entire Church holds, and was not instituted by Councils, but always retained, is to be most justly believed as handed down only by Apostolic authority;" which rule he expressly applies to the Sunday, the Apostles and Apostolic men having sanctioned Sunday to be kept with religious solemnity, because upon it our Redeemer arose from the dead.

2. *Festivals stand on the same religious footing as the Sunday.*

They are certain days set apart for religious worship, to commemorate and celebrate certain great facts or mysteries of religion, or the virtues and rewards of God's saints, in order to glorify Him in them. The institution of Festivals comes in part from the natural law, as nothing can be more in accordance with natural reason than to render public homage to God, praising Him, blessing Him, and glorifying Him for His mercy, goodness, and power, so signally manifested to mankind in His mysteries, and in the graces bestowed on His illustrious servants. Others of them are more especially of Divine institution, like the Pasch, Pentecost, the Feasts of Tabernacles, of Expiation, and of Trumpets, in the Old Law; and others, in fine, are of human origin, like several of the Old Law, and all the festivals of Christian observance, which were instituted at different periods, from the Apostolic times, by the Church.

Some of our Festivals are of obligation, and others of devotion only. On almost every day of the year the Church celebrates some festival, either in honour of the saints or some mystery of religion. A few only are, however, of obligation, namely (**here recite them.**)

3. *How Sundays and Holidays are to be observed.*

Two things are prescribed as of special obligation, hearing

Mass, and refraining from servile work, as well as everything that would profane the day, or hinder its religious observance. These two things are equally required for Festivals as well as for Sundays. Moreover, *both* are recommended to be spent in observances of piety and religion, as for example (here recite them.)

Refute the pretext alleged for not observing the Festivals of the Church. They are chiefly loss of time, and detriment to one's employment, or business. **Answer** by observing 1st, how few the Festivals of obligation are, only nine in number, including Christmas Day itself; 2ndly, how one may lose more time by sickness, which might be entailed as a punishment from God for disobeying the Precept of the Church in the matter; 3rdly, how much more time do people spend foolishly and sinfully, and perhaps on the very holiday itself, than they would lose by observing it.

Observe, however, that the Church, as an indulgent mother, is always ready to admit a sufficient reason for not observing her Precepts, and that, consequently, she yields the obligation wherever there is a real cause, and not a mere pretext. **Explain**, that to be sure of such a cause, it would be well to consult one's confessor, or be guided by the example of good Christians in similar circumstances, and finally **urge**, that when it may be impossible to refrain from temporal occupation, it may be in one's power to assist at Mass, and it would be obligatory to do so.

Conclusion

Recapitulate the points briefly, and offer a short prayer, that by religiously observing the Sabbath of the Lord and His Festivals, as well as those of His saints, we may merit to enter into His everlasting rest, and enjoy a never-ending festival in company with the blessed inhabitants of His heavenly kingdom.

Consult Theology, Catechism of Council of Trent, Guillet's "Projets d' Instructions," lviii. Inst.; Hay's "Sincere Christian," chap. xv., sect. 1.

SECOND PRECEPT OF THE CHURCH.

"To fast and abstain on the days commanded."

Introduction.

Refer to previous subject, recapitulating briefly the principal points. Announce present subject, with a word or two to say how important it is, without, however, going into any statements of reasons; after which invite attention and add a short invocation.

Body of the Subject.

1. *Motives for fasting and abstaining.*

First motive: Grounded on the constitution of human nature in its fallen state To develop this motive, observe that, as we consider ourselves, we find that we are a compound being, consisting of soul and body. In our soul, we are the living likeness of God, spiritual like Him, immortal like Him, endowed with the noble faculties of memory, understanding, and free will. Viewing man according to his soul, the Royal Prophet exclaims: "*What is man, O Lord, that thou art mindful of him? Thou hast made him a little less than the angels, thou hast crowned him with glory and honour.*" (*Ps.* viii 5, 6).

On the other hand, according to our body, we have a nature resembling the poor brute animal. He sees as we see, he hears as we hear, he smells as we smell, he tastes and supports himself by eating and drinking as we do, he feels as we feel, and his body is variously organized in so many ways like ours, that the surgeon, by the examination of his structure, prepares himself, and learns to exercise his profession in dealing with these bodies of ours. It is still more humiliating to consider, that we have the same inclinations, propensities, and passions as they have.

We, therefore, find in ourselves a superior and inferior nature united. These two natures agreed and harmonized in man, as he came forth originally, in a state of innocence and justice, from the hands of God, by a complete subjection of the inferior to the superior nature, and a perfect control of the superior over the inferior, for, as the Scripture tells us, "*God made man right*" in the beginning (*Eccl.* vii. 30). But when man rebelled against God by sin, the inferior part of our being rebelled against

the superior, that is, all that we have in common with the brute creation broke out into rebellion against our nobler part, in which we resemble our Creator.

"This punishment," as St. Augustine remarks, "was greatly due to man for his disobedience to his Creator, that by God's just judgment his flesh should also become disobedient to himself, and that this rebellion should cause in him a continual war." (*Lib. contra adv. legis et pr.* cap. 14).

This state of rebellion, or war, continues in man, and has come down as an unhappy inheritance from our first parents. Therefore, Job, "*Man's life is a warfare upon earth.*" (vii. 1). And St. Paul: "*I see another law in my members, fighting against the law of my mind, and captivating me in the law of sin, that is in my members. Unhappy man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?*" (*Rom.* vii. 23, 24).

But who does not feel this rebellion within himself, this war, this struggle between the lower and the higher portions of his being, between his desires, his inclinations, his propensities, according to corrupt nature, and what he knows to be right, according to his conscience, as guided by reason and religion? Then the great question we have to ask ourselves continually is, which of these contending forces will subdue the other? Will we allow our inferior nature, which is common to us with the brute animal, to domineer over our superior nature, by which we are like to God, or, will we not assert the supremacy of that superior nature over the inferior? Fasting and abstinence come here to our aid. They are exercises of mortification, which, in its essential object, aims at the subjugation of all that is animal in us to reason and religion. In the same way as the animals of the field must have their food regulated for them, and sometimes reduced in quantity and kind, in order to tame them for the use of man, and the various purposes of domestic life, so, too, must man tame down his evil propensities, these inclinations, and desires, which make war in his corrupt nature against his soul.

It was in this way the great St. Paul "*chastised his body, and brought it into subjection*," as he himself tells us, "*lest, perhaps, whilst he preached to others, he himself should become a cast-away.*" (1 *Cor.* ix. 27).

[Some words of exhortation, &c.]

Second motive: Because inculcated by the Divine law both in

the Old and New Testatment. (See *Butler's* "*Feasts and Fasts*," Lent, chap. ii., *on the advantages of holy fasting: also lessons of second Nocturn of Matins, Fourth Sunday of Lent*). Add the constant tradition and practice of the Church, and example of the saints (*Ibid.*); and conclude the point with the words of the Apostle (*Rom.* viii. 13): "*If you live according to the flesh, you shall die; but if by the spirit you mortify the deeds of the flesh, you shall live.*"

2. *The object of fasting and abstinence.*

It is twofold. 1st, Mortification; that is, to subject the corrupt and animal part of our being to the control of reason and religion, as already explained. 2ndly, Penance; that is, punishment we exercise on ourselves to satisfy the Divine justice for our sins, in order "*to fill up*," as St. Paul says "*those things that are wanting in us of the sufferings of Christ.*" (*Col.* i. 24). We must recollect that, though the atonement made by our Divine Lord is abundant and superabundant for our sins, there still remains the application of that atonement to ourselves individually and personally, and this we do, amongst other means, by afflicting and punishing ourselves, or, in other words, by doing penance.

Here lay down the doctrine, that after absolution in the Sacrament of Penance, there yet remains, generally, a temporal punishment due to the justice of God, which is to be satisfied for by penitential works, such as fasting and abstinence, &c.; and *explain* that God gives us the choice either of abiding His justice for punishment, or of punishing ourselves. He presents Himself to us with scourge in hand, and says, either receive chastisement from Me, or take the scourge and chastise yourselves. The chastisement that will satisfy Me, if done by yourself, because it will be done by your own good will, will be less than what you are to expect from Me, for "*it is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God*" (*Heb.* x. 31); and My justice is so rigorous, as to exact the last farthing (*Matt.* v. 26). How much, therefore, is it our interest to practise fasting and abstinence, &c., in order to punish ourselves, and thereby lesson the debt of punishment we owe to God's justice, &c.

3. *In what fasting and abstinence consist.*

In treating this point lay down the following particulars: 1st, That fasting regards the quantity of food allowed, and abstinence the kind of food allowed; **adding,** that there are days of

abstinence, such as Friday, &c., which are not fast days. 2ndly, That the rules of the Church made fasting and abstinence more or less severe, according to the general habits of mankind as to eating and drinking, at different periods of time. 3rdly, That in the early ages of Christianity, mankind usually took but one full meal a day the whole year round, and that if some persons ate oftener, what they took on such occasions was very trifling, a morsel of bread with some little fruit, or some common drink. 4thly, That, consequently, it was not so severe in these times to limit the fast to one meal in the day, and fix the time for taking it after sunset, as it was in the evening that people usually took their full meal. 5thly, That as to abstinence, or the kind of food allowed on fast days, people in the early times used very little flesh meat, and that, therefore, it was no great privation to forbid it altogether on fast days, as also everything that came from flesh, such as milk, butter, and cheese. Fish was forbidden by the primitive rule of fasting. 6thly, That after the lapse of several ages, as the habits of mankind changed, and men ate and drank more largely, the custom of collation was introduced, which consisted of a mere drink, and it was only in the fifteenth century that a morsel of bread was permitted. 7thly, That as generation succeeded generation, mankind indulged more largely in eating and drinking, and it became necessary to relax the rigours of fasting and abstinence, till by dispensation after dispensation they came to what they are at present. 8thly, That at present the Church prescribes the rule to be observed through her chief Pastors the Bishops; so that it may be, and is, different, not only in different countries and dioceses, but also in the same country and diocese at different times, according to the rule prescribed by the Bishop for the time being.

4. *Who are bound to fast and abstain?*

All, except those who are exempted on account, first, of age; secondly, sickness; thirdly, labour; fourthly, poverty; fifthly, fatiguing travelling. **Explain** each, and **observe**, that exemption from fasting does not include exemption from abstinence, which is regulated either by custom, or positive regulation of the Bishop, in different places.

Conclusion.

Recapitulate and exhort.

Consult Theology; Butler's "Feasts and Fasts" on Lent, chap ii. 4; and Bishop Hay's "Sincere Christian," vol. 1, chap. xv., sec. 2

THIRD PRECEPT OF THE CHURCH.

"To confess our sins at least once a year."

Introduction.

Refer to the previous instruction, briefly recapitulating the several points, and state the present subject, adding a few words to assert its importance, without, however, assigning any reason. Invite attention and make a short invocation.

Body of the Subject.

1. *In what the Precept consists.*

State, that as Confession is the way in which the Sacrament of Penance is ordinarily received, it follows that it is as necessary ordinarily as the Sacrament itself; and as the Sacrament is necessary whenever we fall into mortal sin, in order to obtain remission of it, so is Confession necessary for that purpose, as often as such a misfortune occurs. However, this is a vague, general rule, not fixed to times or seasons, on which account the Church deemed it necessary to institute a special rule on the point, which she did in the Fourth Council of Lateran. *Quote* the Canon, and add Eighth Canon of Council of Trent, *Sess.* xiv. **Concluding** the Precept to be binding under pain of mortal sin before God, and entailing the ecclesiastical penalties indicated.

2. *Who are bound by the Precept.*

Expound the Canon of Lateran, explaining at what age it begins to bind, and **exhort** parents to see that their children be prepared in due time, as also masters and mistresses respecting servants and those under their charge.

3. *That we may be bound to go to confession oftener than once a year, for other reasons distinct from the positive Precept of the Church.*

Call attention to three things in the Precept. 1st, That it does not say *once a year*, but says, *at least* once a year, thereby clearly showing that the Church wishes us to go oftener. 2ndly, That she is an indulgent mother. 3rdly, That, nevertheless, she binds us to the precept of once a year by the severest penalties (**recite them again**); whence **infer** that the true meaning of the Precept is, as if the Church would say to each and every one

of her children : " The Sacrament of Penance is a Sacrament of mercy ; to receive it, you should go to confession whenever you fall into mortal sin, and even more frequently for your soul's welfare. This I would counsel and recommend to you in my solicitude for your salvation, but if you will not listen to my counsels or advice, fond and affectionate mother though I am, I must convert this fondness and affection into rigour and severity, and threaten you, that if you put off going to confession for a whole year, I shall cut you off from the communion of your brethren whilst living, and deprive you of Christian burial when dead."

Infer, therefore, when one has the misfortune to fall into mortal sin, he must not wait to the end of the year since his last confession. **Argue** the same point from the danger the sinner exposes himself to by deferring going to confession, as being in a state of damnation, he is liable at any hour or moment to be cast into hell. **Illustrate** this point by example of what we do when attacked by any illness that appears serious ; also by the example of what a person does in insuring a house, when he thinks there is danger of it being destroyed by fire. **Apply** each illustration separately. **Condemn** the folly of Christians acting differently with regard to their souls, showing the truth of our Saviour's words : " *The children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light.*" (*Luke* xvi. 8).

Insist also on the point, that there is no merit for the life to come for anything done in the state of mortal sin. **Quote** 1 *Cor.* xiii. 1, *et seq.* **Argue** the same point from the want of dispositions, generally, on the part of those who go but once a year to confession. **Ask**, who they are generally ? People engaged in habits of sin, people who relapse into sin almost as soon as they return from their confession, realizing in themselves the revolting comparison of the dog returning to the vomit, or the sow, that was washed, to her wallowing in the mire ; people, in fine, who are bound hand and foot, as one might say, in the occasions of sin (**explain**). In all these cases, not to speak of general indolence in examination of conscience, and in stirring up sentiments of sorrow, mere yearly penitents expose themselves to the danger of making bad confessions, whereby in addition to sacrilege, they do not comply with the Precept of the Church, which, in ordering confession, means confession with all its proper conditions to be a good confession.

3. *The effects of frequent confession.*

1st. It keeps us under the direction of one who, in quality of confessor, is to us a judge, a father, a physician, a doctor. 2ndly, It keeps us constantly on our guard against temptations, according to the words of the Apostle, 1 *Pet.* v. 8, which quote. 3rdly, It excites us to renew our efforts in the way of salvation. 4thly, Besides the remission of our sins, it confers grace, each time, to persevere in the friendship of God.

Go on to ask: what makes the difference between the *many* who are called and the *few* that are chosen in any population: the *many* that enter the wide gate, and walk in the broad way to perdition, and the *few* that enter by the narrow gate and journey on in the narrow way that leadeth to life everlasting? Answer: is it not the frequentation, on the one side, and the neglect of confession on the other? Ask, with whom would we wish to take our chance for eternity? &c.

Conclusion.

Recapitulate the points and exhort to the observance of the Precept not merely in the letter, but in the spirit, which is that we should go frequently to confession, and more especially when one finds himself guilty of mortal sin.

Consult Theology on the Precept, also Bishop Hay's "Sincere Christian," vol. 1, chap. xv. sec. 3.

FOURTH PRECEPT OF THE CHURCH.

"*To receive worthily the Blessed Eucharist at Easter, or thereabouts, or within the time appointed.*"

Introduction.

Refer to previous subject, recapitulating the points, mention present subject, adding a few words on its importance, for which purpose, quote the words of holy Simeon: "*This Child is set up,*" *&c.* (*Luke* ii. 34), which apply to our Saviour in the Blessed Eucharist.

[Invite attention, and invoke a blessing]

Body of the Subject.

1. *This precept to be understood consistently with the advantages and practice of frequent Communion.*

1st. Because instituted by our Divine Lord to be received

frequently. **Show this** by stating, that all the Sacraments were so instituted as to indicate, in their outward form, their effects upon our souls. **Show this** by other Sacraments, and **go on to observe**: The Blessed Sacrament was instituted under the outward form of bread and wine, that is, the food we take for the nourishment of our bodies. The reason in the mind of our Saviour was, thereby to indicate that He instituted this mystery as a Divine food for our souls. **Quote** to this effect *John* vi., 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59. Now, it is of the nature of food to be used frequently and constantly. In this it differs from medicine, which is to be used only occasionally, as necessity requires, as a remedy against sickness, &c. Hence from its very institution, the Blessed Eucharist was intended by our Divine Lord to be received frequently.

2ndly. On account of the practice of the primitive Church. **Quote** *Acts* ii. 46. Tradition tells us that this habit continued in the early ages of the Church: that all who assisted at Mass went also to Communion, and that the Holy Communion was even sent to those who could not be present, and also that in times of persecution it was given to the faithful to take home and to communicate themselves, at the approach of danger.

Go on to state, that as every good thing is capable of being abused, abuses began to appear even at an early period with respect to the Holy Communion. **Quote** St. Paul denouncing these abuses, and requiring suitable dispositions (1 *Cor.* xi. 20–31).

Go on to state, that as the persecutions had ceased, the Church spread without obstacle, and became the net of the parable, gathering all kinds of fishes, good and bad (*Matt.* xiii. 47). On this account, it became more necessary for the pastors of the Church to insist upon the conditions of a worthy Communion, and sound in the ears of the faithful the denunciations of St. Paul. **Repeat them.** For this reason, as also owing to a gradual falling away from the fervour of the first ages of the Church, many refrained altogether for a long time from the Holy Table, and, on this account, it became necessary for the Church to institute a positive precept, requiring all the faithful to go to Communion at least once a year, and this at the time of Easter. (**Here quote** the Precept of the Fourth Council of Lateran, canon 21, and its confirmation by the Council of Trent, sess xiii., canon 9, **which recite**).

It, therefore, appears evident that the Precept was instituted

on account of careless and negligent Christians, and that the spirit of the Church remained the same, wishing the faithful to partake frequently of the Holy Communion. Of this we are assured by all the Holy Fathers who have treated the subject, as also by the decrees and acts of the various Councils of the Church, as well general as particular, at different periods. It will be enough to cite the Council of Trent, sess. xxii., chap. vi., and sess. xiii., chap. viii.

2. *The true meaning of the Precept.*

The Precept should fill us with shame and confusion. Who could ever believe, when our loving Lord was instituting this endearing mystery, that it would be necessary to compel His followers, under the heaviest penalties, to partake of it? **Describe** the scene of the Last Supper, with the circumstances respecting the words (*Luke* xxii. 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19). **Ask** again, who could suppose that there would be men calling themselves Christians, and who would require to be dragged to this Divine banquet? What greater bounty could be conferred upon us? and, oh! the ingratitude, &c. **Enlarge** on this consideration, quoting *Isai.* v. 4, 5, &c.

Also, let us suppose that any one of us had a conversation with an intelligent pagan, who had never heard before of the Blessed Eucharist, and that we explained this adorable mystery, expatiating on the goodness, mercy, and love of our ever dear Redeemer in it, as also on His desire that we should frequently enrich our souls with it. The poor pagan would, no doubt, be amazed. But should he inquire if there were any of us, any Christians, who declined the invitation, and disregarded the desire of our Divine Lord, what would be our confusion in being obliged to admit this to be the fact, that there are Christians who require to be driven to it by threats of the severest penalties the Church could inflict, &c.

Infer, therefore, that the Precept is designed for negligent, disobedient, refractory Christians, and that by saying "at least," it leaves us to infer, what we know from so many other sources that, in order to comply with the designs of our Divine Lord, and comply with the constant teaching of the Church, and walk in the footsteps of the true servants of God in every age, we should approach the Holy Communion frequently.

3. *The fulfilment of the Precept.*

1st. A worthy Communion.

2ndly. Within the time appointed; and should the time be

allowed to elapse, then state, there exists an obligation of going as soon as possible, or, at least within a year since last Communion, the Precept being annual as well as Paschal.

3rdly. In the parish Church.

4thly. All Christians are bound from the age of discretion, that is, discretion sufficient for the worthy reception of the Blessed Sacrament. **Explain.**

Conclusion.

Recapitulate principal points. Expostulate with any that may be negligent as to their Easter duty, and encourage to the practice of frequent Communion.

Consult Theology; also Bishop Hay's "Sincere Christian," chap. xv., sec. 3, and Council of Trent, sess. xiii.

FIFTH PRECEPT OF THE CHURCH.

"*To pay tithes, or contribute to the support of our Pastors.*"

Introduction.

Refer to the previous instruction, recapitulating the chief points.

Announce present subject, and observe that you would have unwillingness, from reasons that may be well understood, in treating of this subject, except that it came before you in the course of instructions you are engaged in; that, nevertheless, you feel the whole force of the reasons of delicacy to which you allude, and that you will keep them in view in what you will have to say upon this Precept of the Church.

Invoke the Divine blessing, saying something to the following effect: "Let us therefore give ourselves to God, that He may enlighten us, and give us to understand what our duties are in a matter which, whilst it concerns the faithful and Pastors of the Church, concerns also His Divine Majesty in the homage and worship which He requires of us."

Body of the Subject.

1. *The priest in being called to the ecclesiastical ministry, is taken from amongst mankind, to be entirely engaged in the works of the high and holy profession he has undertaken.*

Here go through a detail of his principal duties, and say that

to perform these duties he must be released from the temporal occupations which engage mankind at large, according to the words of St. Paul. (**Quote** 2 *Tim.* ii. 4). Yet this soldier of Christ, this minister of religion, must live and have the means of living. Hence the Apostle lays down the other maxim (1 *Cor.* ix. 7), which he repeatedly inculcates (*Rom.* xv. 27). This is only conformable with the teaching of our Lord Himself (*Luke* x. 7), which St. Paul quotes (1 *Tim.* v. 18).

Infer, therefore, that there exists not only a Precept of the Church, but a Divine Precept also in the case; which, indeed, may be said, in all strictness, to be moreover a precept of the natural law.

2. *The provision made for the support of the priest had, in the Old Law, the positive orders of God.*

This is an instruction to us respecting the fifth Precept of the Church, in the following particulars:—1st. He took them from amongst the rest of the people, and set them apart by themselves; 2ndly, they were to have no share in the division of the promised land; 3rdly, God promised that He Himself would be their portion and inheritance in the midst of the children of Israel (*Num.* xviii. 20). He therefore ordained various tributes to be given to them in His own name. These were tithes, or the tenth part of the yearly produce of corn and fruits, as also of oxen, sheep, and other animals, "*that passeth under the shepherd's rod*," as the Sacred Text expresses it 4thly, He ordained, moreover, that the first fruits of the substance of the people should be offered to Him for the use and maintenance of the priests and Levites. *Repeat*, all this was arranged by God, He making the case of the priests His own, &c.

3. *The support of the ministers of religion in the New Law.*

Observe, that our Divine Lord instituted no fixed system for the support of the ministers of His religion. He merely laid down the general principle that "*the labourer is worthy of his hire*" (*Luke* x. 7), and based everything else upon a mutual good will between the labourer of the Gospel on one side, and the faithful on the other, relying on the former to labour in the work of his ministry from a principle of zeal, and on the faithful to support him from a principle of religious generosity. Accordingly, He said to His Apostles, "*Freely have you received, freely give.*" (*Matt.* x. 8). "*Into whatso ever house you enter, say: Peace be to this house. And in the same house remain, eating and drinking*

such things as they have. And into what city soever you enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you. For the labourer is worthy of his hire." (*Luke* x. 8). St. Paul, in his First Epistle to the Corinthians, explains the same system, showing, on the one side, the obligation of the faithful to contribute to the support of the ministers of religion, and, on the other, the zeal with which the ministers of religion should labour, irrespective of such support. (**Quote** 1 *Cor.* ix. 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, for the obligation of the people, and 15, 16, 17, 18, respecting the ministers of religion). **A brief comment** on each text, as you go along, applying its force to the two points in view respectively. Such was the disinterested zeal with which our Blessed Lord inspired His Apostles, and first preachers of His Gospel, and the faithful did their part by a corresponding generosity, according to their humble means, so that, when the Gospel labourers came back to their Divine Master, He asked them: "*When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, did you want any thing? But they said: Nothing.*" (*Luke* xxii. 35).

This spontaneous zeal continued after the Ascension, amongst the Apostles, so that they might all say with St. Paul (*Acts* xx. 27, and 2 *Cor.* xii. 15); and their converts received them everywhere as angels of God, and were ready to give them their very eyes in return for their zeal. (*Gal.* iv. 14, 15).

This blessed state of relations, between the ministers of religion and the first Christians, continued in all their fervour during the centuries of persecution that followed, so that nothing could separate them. They shared the same hardships, &c., and their blood flowed together in the same martyrdom, &c.

When persecution abated, we find the offerings of the faithful flowing into the Church with such liberality, that the Bishops were enabled to make distribution of them, allotting over and above for their own support, and that of their clergy, a third division for the repairing and improvement of the Church itself, and a fourth division for the poor.

4. As we follow on the current of history, we come to times, when, after the conversion of Constantine, he and succeeding emperors espoused the cause of the Church, and made permanent provision for its support. The example was continued and adopted by the various kingdoms that sprang up after the fall of the Roman Empire, and hence arose that connection between Church and State, which continued so many centuries during

those ages properly designated, "The Ages of Faith." The State recognised in the Church a perfect society, capable of acquiring, possessing, and expending property with uncontrolled liberty for her own purposes. Hence originated the large temporal possessions of the Pope, the properties attached to bishoprics and monasteries, the benefices of the parochial clergy. Hence also arose the various temporal privileges and rights of the Church in the variety of forms in which history presents them to us. However, whilst the Church was endowed in this way with property of its own, the custom of voluntary offerings always continued, so as to preserve and maintain the good-will mutually existing between the clergy and faithful individually and personally from the beginning.

5. But evil days were to come. Nothing is stable in this world. Revolutions were to break out in different countries, with or without the overthrow of the Church in these countries, and the substitution of an heretical worship. But in all cases of revolution the rights of property are trampled upon, and violence and rapine become the order of the day. Hence the Church not being in a state to offer resistance, her property was sacrilegiously seized upon, and spoliated, until finally the hands of the spoiler, not respecting even the possessions of the Vicar of Christ, robbed him of them to his very palace, which was thereby rendered a prison for his confinement, as though he were a malefactor in the face of the world.

We know that the Irish Church had her possessions too, and we know what became of them. But after seizing on them, and making them over upon a hostile establishment after having demolished our churches, monasteries, and convents, there was one thing the enemy could not do: he could not separate the Priest from the people, nor the people from the Priest. In vain was it he set a price on the head of the pastor; in vain was it to have reduced him to such a state, as that he could, in all truth, say with his Divine Master that whilst "*the foxes had holes, and the birds of the air nests, He had not where to lay His head.*" (*Matt.* viii. 20). In vain was it to rob the faithful of their property, and try to exterminate them by war and its concomitant evils, famine and pestilence; in spite of all they remained, Priests and people, and they remained living and dying for each other, the pastor giving his life for his flock, and the flock yielding everything to maintain and preserve the pastor amongst them,

to defend their souls, as they could not their bodies, from the ravening wolves. Blessed be God; be He eternally blessed! How dear should not our holy religion be to us, but how especially dear should not be that union, which kept Priests and people bound so inseparably to each other, through the long centuries of persecution through which our National Church has passed.

6. This union survived all, and it survives all, to the present day, and as we look around us, and see how our institutions have sprung up anew, our churches, our convents, our monasteries, and our schools, should we not lift up our hearts, and hands, and voices, in praise and thanksgiving to the Almighty for that voluntary system, that spontaneous system, of giving to God what we receive from God, which, creation-like, has achieved these prodigies of Christian benevolence in our own times?

And as to the pastors of religion, the Bishops and Priests, what is our condition? Thanks to this mode of support, if our Divine Saviour were to ask us, as He asked His Apostles, "*did we want any thing?*" we should be bound to say, "*No, Lord, we want nothing,*" the principle which Thou didst inculcate, "*the labourer is worthy of his hire,*" is more than recognised by our good people. Let others have whatever systems they prefer, but for us the voluntary system has a charm, a charm endearing by the recollections of the past, endearing by the enjoyment of the present, and endearing by the prospects of the future, &c.

Conclusion.

Recapitulate, that, in the abstract, the minister of religion has a right, natural and divine, to be supported by the people to whom he gives his services; that this principle was made matter of special legislation in the Old Law by God Himself; that in the New Law the principle of good-will, enriched with the grace and blessing of heaven, took the place of the constrained system; that this principle, finding access to the temporal powers, led to the endowment of the Church; that with this endowment, nevertheless, always existed the system of voluntary personal oblations of the faithful; that the robbing of the Church followed by means of revolution; that Ireland shared in the general wreck more than almost any other country; that, nevertheless, through God's special blessing in maintaining His people and Priests of Ireland in invincible union, the Church has revived in all her institutions by the voluntary liberality of

the faithful; that bringing that liberality into other lands, we are fulfilling an apostolic destiny, spreading the faith, advancing the standard of the cross, &c.

O! let us pray that God may preserve this spontaneous liberality amongst us; that we may hand down our holy religion to those who are to come after us, pure and undefiled, without spot or wrinkle, as we received it from the generations that have gone before us in unbroken succession, since it was imported to our shores by our Holy Apostle, St. Patrick.

Consult "Sincere Christian," vol. 1, chap. xv., sec. 4.

SIXTH PRECEPT OF THE CHURCH.

"*Not to solemnize marriage within forbidden times, or forbidden degrees of kindred, or clandestinely, or in any other way prohibited by the Church.*"

Introduction.

Refer to preceding subject, briefly recapitulating the points, after which, announce present subject, asserting importance by observing the happiness of mankind is bound up with it, that society is made up of families, and families have their origin from marriage; that, consequently, if the origin be good, much is gained for the family and society, and if the origin be bad, the evil descends on the offspring, and goes forth on society.

[Invite attention, and beg a blessing.]

Body of the Subject.

1. Marriage takes its commencement from these words of God, *Gen.* i. 27, 28, which quote as far as "*multiply.*" Observe how, first. He blessed their union; secondly, how He indicated to them the purpose of their union, saying, "*increase and,*" *&c.* Observe, how the whole human race is come from this union of one man and one woman blessed and celebrated by God Himself; that He could have created mankind in any number He liked, but that it was His adorable will, that we should all have the same first father and mother, and be therefore all brothers and sisters, and so love each other as members of the same family, &c.

2. Marriage, having thus a Divine origin, was therefore a

religious act and celebrated with religious ceremonies from the beginning amongst the people of God. But our Divine Lord raised it to the dignity of a Sacrament, and not only a Sacrament, but "*a great Sacrament*," which in the union of husband and wife was destined to represent the union of our Divine Lord with His spouse the Church. (Quote *Ephes.* v. 32), and therefore, the Apostle exhorts the husband to love his wife, as Christ loves His Church. Quote *Ephes.* v. 25, 26, 27, 28.

Infer, that on this account the Sacrament of Marriage was always a very precious concern of the Church, and that it has been a subject of special legislation in her Councils, at different periods of the Church's history; and that in her legislation she appointed particularly the conditions, under which Marriage should be lawful and even valid. Hence arise what she calls impediments, impediments of her own legislation, besides those arising from the Divine and natural law.

3. Go on to observe, that under the Sixth Precept of the Church, we are concerned only for the impediments enacted by the Church, and not even for all her impediments, but for those special ones mentioned in the Precept. To treat of them all would require several instructions, as they are the matter of an extensive treatise of Theology.

Confining yourself, therefore, to the Precept of the Church, you will first lay down, that she forbids the *solemnization* of marriages within certain times. State the times and give the reasons.

Observe, that a dispensation may be procured on sufficient grounds.

Explain the meaning of *solemnize;* and observe, how, even with a dispensation, the *public* celebration should be avoided.

Further lay down this to be an impediment of prohibition only, and here take occasion to distinguish between the two kinds of impediments, those of prohibition only, and annulling impediments, stating the effect of each, and repeating that the impediment *as to time* is only an impediment of prohibition, &c.

4. Proceed to the second part of the Precept, distinguishing between consanguinity and affinity. State the impediment for each separately, mentioning not only the degrees, but the cousinships, *e.g.* after saying to the fourth degree, add: first cousins cannot marry; second cousins cannot marry; third cousins cannot marry, but fourth cousins can. Say that in blood relationship the impediment holds equally and to the same number of degrees, whether the relationship proceed from the half-blood or the whole blood (explain), or whether it be legitimate, or illegitimate.

Respecting affinity, after stating the impediment, and how far it

extends, **explain** the cousinships as above, first with respect to the husband, and then with respect to the wife, and add, that this impediment exists not only in the case of lawful wedlock, but also in the case of sinful intercourse, but not to the same extent, in the latter case reaching only to the second degree, or the degree of first cousins. **Repeat** these cases of consanguinity and affinity to be annulling impediments.

5. **Explain** Clandestinity. As to Parish Priest and Bishop of the diocese, how either can act independently of the other in the case, and give authority to other priests for the marriage.

Conclusion.

Conclude by observing that the Precept does not mention any other impediment, but hints at others, which, as you observed already, are too numerous to be treated of, &c., &c. **Wind up** with a recapitulation, and some exhortation to parents to observe the laws of the Church in the marriage of their children, and pointing out that so many marriages prove unhappy on account of neglect on this head.

Consult Theology; also "Sincere Christian," vol. 1, chap. xv., sec. 5.

N.B.—If you have time, notice, in its proper place, the reasons the Church has for prohibiting and annulling marriages within prohibited degrees of kindred, &c.

See "Sincere Christian," *ibid.*

THE PRECEPTS OF THE CHURCH IN GENERAL.

CONCLUDING INSTRUCTION.

"*These things I write to thee . . . that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of truth.*"—1 Tim. iii. 14, 15.

Introduction.

In these remarkable words St. Paul reminds his beloved disciple Timothy of the end and purpose of his writing to him, namely, that he might know, &c. It is for a similar end and purpose we learn the Precepts of the Church, and study them, that we, like St. Timothy, may know how likewise to behave ourselves as true members of the Church. **Observe**, that, before entering on the Precepts of the Church, we gave an instruction on the Precepts generally; **that that instruction** was prospective,

taking a general view in advance, or beforehand, of the Church's Precepts; that in the same way, after having treated of them singly, it may be useful to take a general look back upon them, in order to insure all the better their observance.

[Invite attention, and add a short invocation.]

BODY OF THE SUBJECT.

1. *The observance of the Precepts of the Church is possible.*

She follows the inspiration of the Holy Ghost in her laws, and imitates the legislation of God Himself. **Notice**, there were, and are, heretics, who venture rashly and impiously to assert that the Commandments of God, or some of them, are not always possible of observance. **Reprobate** the impiety which would make God unjust, cruel, and wanting in all wisdom and prudence. (**Quote** Council of Trent, Sess. vi., chap. xi., and Canon xviii.) **Apply** *Deut.* xxx. 11, 12, 13, 14, and **say** the same of the Church, and **conclude** the point.

2. *They are binding under pain of mortal sin.*

Thus, to neglect Mass on a Sunday or Holiday, &c., would be a mortal sin. *Reasons:* because the Church has authority to bind under this penalty (*Matt.* xviii. 17); because the duties prescribed are essential duties of the natural and the Divine law, the Church doing no more than regulating their observance, in order to make sure of their being observed. **Observe**, therefore, how the Church may say with reference to her precepts, what Moses said with regard to the Commandments he proclaimed to the Israelites on the part of God (*Deut.* xxx. 15–19), and **conclude** the point.

3. *That though her Precepts be binding under pain of mortal sin, the Church is always ready for good and proper reasons to grant dispensations.*

Observe, how in availing ourselves of these dispensations, we honour and respect the authority of the Church, but **censure** two classes of people: 1st, those who take the law into their own hands, &c.; 2ndly, those who, in applying for dispensations, either exaggerate or understate the reasons they allege, or otherwise act uncandidly.

Further state, that there are certain cases that speak for themselves, in which every one may feel himself dispensed, *e.g.*, invalids as regards fasting, taking care of a sick person as exempting from the obligation of Mass, &c.

4. *That beyond these exemptions and dispensations all are bound, and bound by each and every one of the Precepts of the Church.*

Go through an enumeration of various classes, *e.g.*, rich and poor, high and low, priests and people, &c., and for each and all, **quote** *Matt.* v. 19, and *James* ii. 10. **Apply** the same to the Church, showing the parity of reasons.

5. *Though the observance of the Precepts of the Church be possible, this is to be understood subject to the condition of Divine grace.*

Quote *John* xv. 5, and 2 *Cor.* iii. 5. But God always grants us, if we pray for it, the grace we stand in need. **Quote** 1 *Cor.* x. 13; also the words of St. Augustine: "God does not order things that are impossible, but in His orders He puts before you to do what you can do, and to ask His assistance for what you cannot do of yourself, that so you may be enabled to do it." Hence the necessity of prayer (*James* iv. 2). "*You have not because you ask not*" (iv. 3). **Apply**, by observing many excuse themselves, alleging their weakness, &c., and **exhort** to have recourse to God by prayer, &c.

6. *The Precepts of the Church to be observed with an inward spirit of devotion and piety.*

A duty of religion, consequently *interior*: like the homage of children to a tender mother, therefore, &c.

7. *The observance to persevere to the end.*

The Church takes us under her care from our birth by baptism, so that each of us can say of her with the *Psalmist*, cxxxviii. 13, and she conducts us through life even to old age. (**Quote** lxx. 18, as applicable also to the **Church.**)

Conclusion.

Exhort to the observance of the Precepts of the Church, repeating as motives the various points laid down. **Urge** parents to aid the authority of the Church with regard to their children, and masters and mistresses with regard to servants under their care, **and close** with the words of St. Paul, saying, that in the Church of **God it is** our happiness to have come to Mount Sion, &c. (*Heb.* xii. 22, 23).

Consult Guillet's "Projets d'Instructions," lxiii. **Inst.**

PART III.

ON PRAYER.

SPECIAL PREFACE

TO

PART III.

THE Programmes of this division treat of Prayer, and especially of "the Lord's Prayer," and the "Hail Mary." The Pastor of souls cannot be too earnest in inculcating the great Christian duty of Prayer. Prayer, according to the teaching of St. Augustine, is "the Key of Heaven." By it we have access to heaven's treasures, and are enabled to enrich ourselves with all the graces we stand in need of in our pilgrimage through this valley of tears. This is our dear Saviour's promise: "*Ask*," says He, "*and it shall be given you: seek, and you shall find: knock, and it shall be opened to you.*" (*Matt.* vii. 7.) Whereas, the Apostle is emphatic, on the other hand, in saying: "*You have not, because you ask not*," and he immediately adds: "*You ask, and receive not, because you ask amiss.*" (*James* iv. 2, 3.) Thus it is, that if, according to our Saviour's words in the Apocalypse, many Christians "*be wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked*" (*Apoc.* iii. 17), they owe this state of spiritual destitution and misery to their not praying, or to their praying without the due conditions of prayer. Hence, as we look to either alternative, we see that prayer is the pivot on which our destiny revolves for an eternity of weal or woe. St. Thomas, treating this subject theologically, states, that "What God has determined from all eternity to give to souls, He gives it in time, by the means and help of prayer;" and this teaching of the Angel of the School is in strict accordance with the doctrine of the holy Fathers of the Church from the beginning. "*I have planted*," says St. Paul, "*Apollo watered, but God gave the increase.*" (1 *Cor.* iii. 6.) This is the law of God's providence, and our co-operation. Certain conditions are required on our part, and the action of Providence is bound

up with these conditions, that the designs of the Almighty may be accomplished in our regard. Thus is it that a Pastor of souls, looking on the flock confided to his care, should say to himself: the means of salvation are assured to this people, and heaven is open to them, but one condition is essentially required, that they pray, and make their lives a continual prayer, according to the words of our Divine Lord Himself, "*that we ought always to pray, and not to faint*" (*Luke* xviii. 1), which the Apostle inculcates by exhorting us "*to pray without ceasing.*" (1 *Thess.* v. 17).

The following Programmes treat of Prayer in general, setting forth its necessity and efficacy, with the requisite conditions, and then divide "the Lord's Prayer," according to the several petitions it contains, adhering to the Catechism of the Council of Trent; after which they analyse "the Hail Mary," showing the shares the Angel Gabriel and St. Elizabeth had respectively in the first part of this most tender address to the Immaculate Mother of God; and how, in the second part added by the Church, we acknowledge ourselves sinners, but confide in her, who is the Refuge of Sinners, for the graces we stand in need of during life, and more especially for the grace of graces, the grace of a happy death. Then follow Programmes on devotion to the Blessed Virgin, to the Angels and Saints, on Religious Emblems, the Presence of God and Examination of Conscience, Spiritual Reading and Meditation.

The subjects are mainly instructional or didactic, leaving, however, copious room for sentiment, which should be interspersed as occasion may warrant, in order to maintain the spirit and proper character of a religious address.

ON PRAYER.

FIRST INSTRUCTION:
NECESSITY OF PRAYER.

"*We ought always to pray.*"—LUKE xviii. 1.

INTRODUCTION.

A few words on Divine Grace, to lay down its necessity for salvation, whence proceed to say that amongst the means of obtaining God's grace the most ordinary one is Prayer.

Observe, that the subject is too extensive to be treated of in one instruction, on which account you will confine yourself in the present instruction to the *necessity* of Prayer.

[Invite attention and add a short invocation.]

BODY OF THE SUBJECT.

1 *Proofs of the necessity of Prayer.*

1st. *From the end of Man.* Man being created for God, to know Him, love Him, and serve Him in this world, and to enjoy Him in the world to come, cannot attain this end without thinking of God and tending to Him. This is the work of prayer, prayer being in its essential meaning an elevation of the soul to God. Hence, &c.

2ndly. *From the constitution of the soul.* It is made to think, as the sun to shine, and it is made to desire and to love what is good and perfect. Therefore it must think of God, the author of its being and the most noble object of its contemplation; and it must needs desire and love Him as the source and centre of all perfection. But in this thinking of God, and desiring and loving Him, the soul is exercised in prayer, &c.

From both arguments infer, that he, who would abandon prayer, would not only turn away from the end of his creation, but act in opposition to the very nature and constitution of his soul.

3rdly. *From the agreement and practice of all mankind.* Men may have lost the knowledge of the true God, and become idolaters; yet in the worship of their idols they prove that

prayer is a duty of the natural law independently of all revelation on the subject.

4thly. *From the example of our Divine Lord Himself,* who, not having any want of prayer, used to spend the night in prayer after spending the day in preaching and labour, in order to inculcate the necessity of prayer. Quote examples. (*Luke* vi. 12; Prayer in the Garden, *Matt.* xxvi.)

5thly. *Endless inculcations of Scripture.* (Quote some texts.)

6thly. *From the universal teaching of Divines,* who insist on prayer being as necessary as baptism; that many graces we stand in need of, as well for our salvation, as to advance in virtue, must be the result of prayer. (*See* St. Liguori, and quote the words, with which he closes his "Treatise on Prayer"):—"Being convinced of the absolute necessity of prayer, inculcated in numberless passages of the Old and New Testament, I have introduced into the Missions of our Congregation a rule, that has been observed for many years, and which prescribes, that on every Mission a sermon be preached on prayer, and I say and repeat, and will repeat as long as I live, that our salvation depends altogether on prayer; and on that account all writers in their books, all preachers in their sermons, and all confessors in the tribunal of penance, should inculcate nothing with greater zeal than the practice of continual prayer, and that they should constantly exclaim and repeat, PRAY, PRAY, and never cease to PRAY; for, if you pray, your salvation is secured, if you neglect prayer, your perdition is inevitable."

2. *How to comply with the necessary obligation of Prayer.*

1st. By morning and evening prayer. Dwell upon both and inculcate them. Recommend family prayer, particularly at night.

2ndly. By sanctifying Sundays and Holidays (inculcate).

3rdly. By praying in all undertakings, dangers, and grave events, &c.

4thly. By offering all our thoughts, words and actions to God, making our lives thereby a constant prayer, according to the words of our Saviour, "*We ought always to pray.*" (*Luke* xviii. 1).

Conclusion.

Conclude with some words inculcating the subject.

Consult Guillet's "Projets d'Instructions," lxxx. Inst., Bishop Hay's "Devout Christian," vol. 1, chap. x., and also Catechism of the Council of Trent, and St. Liguori "On Prayer."

ON PRAYER.

SECOND INSTRUCTION: ITS EFFICACY.

"*All things whatsoever you shall ask in prayer, believing, you shall receive.*"—MATT. xxi. 22.

INTRODUCTION.

Refer to previous subject, recapitulating the chief points, and ending with an announcement of the present subject.

[Beg attention, and a few words of invocation.]

BODY OF THE SUBJECT.

1. *Proofs of the efficacy of Prayer.*

1st. Its efficacy guaranteed by the promises of God, repeated innumerably in the Holy Scriptures. Quote texts, *Luke* vii. 7; *Mark* xi. 24; *John* xiv. 13; xvi. 23, &c.

2ndly. Scripture examples, especially that of Moses on the Mount (*Exod.* xvii.), Josue stopping the sun in its course (*Josue* x.), Elias shutting up the heaven for three and a-half years (3 *Kings* xvii.), Peter released from prison (*Acts* xii. 5), &c.

Adduce the example of St. Patrick as coming home particularly to us. Mention what is stated in the Breviary on his feast, and observe the efficacy of his prayers in the preservation of the faith and religion he introduced into Ireland, notwithstanding all her sufferings and persecutions; that whilst the faith was extirpated in other lands by much less suffering, it outlasted all its trials in Ireland, which is to-day the most Catholic nation in the world, not only by the observance of her religion at home, but also by its propagation abroad, &c.

N.B.—In each of the above cases, relate the fact, and infer the efficacy of prayer.

2. *Reflections.*

1st. How consoling to have the treasures of heaven at our command; **comparison** of the subjects of a kingdom who would have access to its treasures. 2ndly. **Reproach** those who fall into sin, who yield to dejection, who complain of their weakness in God's service, whereas they have a remedy in prayer. 3rdly. A universal means open even to the worst and last of sinners; hence **encourage** sinners always to pray.

Conclusion.

Conclude with some words of exhortation suggested by the foregoing points.

Consult St. Liguori "On Prayer," Bishop Hay's "Devout Christian," vol 1, chap. x.; Guillet's "Projets d'Instructions," lxxx. Inst.

ON PRAYER.

THIRD INSTRUCTION: THE CONDITIONS OF PRAYER.

"*You ask, and receive not, because you ask amiss.*"—James iv. 3.

Introduction.

Refer to preceding subject, and announce the present one, after which a word or two to say how important it is, and a short invocation.

Body of the Subject.

1. *Conditions of Prayer.*

State them: Attention, Devotion, Humility, Confidence, and Perseverance.

1st. *Attention* consists in taking our mind away from everything else, to fix it, and keep it fixed on our prayer. How is it to be done? **Quote**, "*Before prayer*" (*Eccles.* xviii. 23). *Example of the Church* in the Divine Office: "*Deus in adjutorium meum intende.*" Afterwards to remove distractions as they occur. **Observe** that involuntary distractions are no hindrance to prayer.

2ndly. *Devotion*, that is to be in earnest, to give one's heart to prayer: "*This people honoureth me with their lips,*" &c. (*Matt.* xv. 8). **Comparison** of a person offering a gift to a great man, or a beggar seeking for alms. **Observe**, that in prayer we are beggars before God. "*But I am a beggar.*" (*Ps.* xxxix. 18).

3rdly. *Humility*. **Show** this from the position of the petitioner. **Give** the example of the Pharisee and the Publican. (*Luke* xviii.)

4thly. *Confidence*. **Show** this from the express promise of

our Divine Lord : "*Ask, and you shall receive,*" *&c.*, with many other texts.

5thly. *Perseverance:* the crowning condition. Quote "*Ask, and you shall receive,*" *&c.*, and observe that by adding the words "*seek,*" *&c.*, and "*knock,*" our Divine Lord inculcated the condition of perseverance.

Quote parable, *Luke* xi., laying stress on the words "*because of his importunity;*" also relate the prayer of the woman of Canaan. (*Matt.* xv.)

Conclusion.

Sum up, and pray that we may always offer up our prayers with these conditions.

Consult Bishop Hay's "Devout Christian," vol. 1, chap. x.; and Guillet's "Projets d'Instructions," lxxxi. Inst., as also St. Liguori "On Prayer."

DEVOTION TO THE PASSION OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.

"*Being justified therefore by faith, let us have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ; by whom also we have access through faith into this grace, wherein we stand, and glory in the hope of the glory of the sons of God.*"—Rom. v. 1, 2.

Introduction.

In our preceding discourse we treated of the conditions that should accompany our prayers to render them acceptable at the throne of Grace. They are, attention, devotion, humility, confidence, and perseverance. But we must always bear in mind that these conditions suppose, as a fundamental principle, that we offer up our prayers in the name and through the merits of Jesus Christ. It is through Him and His infinite merits our prayers reach the ears of the Most High. It is through Him and His merits we are allowed access to His Eternal Father. He is our great Mediator and Advocate in the consistory of heaven. It is through His mediation and advocacy, that being far off we are brought nigh, He being "*our peace,*" as the Apostle says, "*breaking down the middle wall of*

partition," that separated us from God. (*Eph.* ii. 14). Now, this mediation, this advocacy, this access, which we have to the throne of God, are the effects of our dear Saviour's Passion and Death, whereby this merciful Redeemer, as the same Apostle affirms, "*reconciles us to God by the cross, killing the enmities in Himself.*" (*Eph.* ii. 16.)

The Passion of our Divine Lord being thus the door of admission, by which our prayers find access to the throne of God's mercy, it will be more than interesting—it will be highly salutary—to consider the devotion we owe to this great mystery, taking account of the motives we have for this devotion, and some of the ways in which we may practise it.

[A few words to invite attention, and invoke a blessing.]

Body of the Subject.

1. *Motives for being devout to the Passion of our Divine Lord.*

First motive. How reasonable and just this devotion is. If a fellow-being has rendered us a service of any kind, we remember the service with feelings of esteem and gratitude for our benefactor. These feelings are still more enhanced, if, in order to render us this service, he has undergone some severe suffering, and made painful sacrifices; but, if he had spilled his blood and laid down his life, giving us the greatest proof he could possibly give of his friendship and love—for, as our Saviour Himself says, "*Greater love than this no man hath, that a man lay down his life for his friends*" (*John* xv. 13)—what should be our sentiments in his regard? He would be always present to our minds. His name would be constantly on our lips, and we would never cease rendering him, in every way in our power, the greatest testimonies we could afford of our respect for his memory, and of our undying gratitude for so great a benefactor. All this, natural feeling would call for; and we should cease to be human beings, we should stand guilty before all mankind, as well as before our own conscience, of resisting the strongest instincts of our nature, in acting otherwise. **Apply the supposition, stating** how our Divine Lord has suffered for us, without obligation, without interest on His part, and without any right or claim upon ours. (**Quote** *Jer. Lament* i. 12, as an exhortation, and *Isai.* lxv. 2, as a reproach.) **Appeal** to the crucifix, and **say**: that through this sacred emblem our Saviour addresses us, and says, "Behold how I loved you.

Survey My entire body from the sole of the foot to the crown of My head; see My head crowned with thorns," &c. Go through a summary of the Passion, adding, that "*He was wounded for our iniquities and bruised for our sins*" (*Isai.* liii. 5); after which appeal and insist upon devotion to the Passion of our Divine Lord as a tribute demanded of us by the strongest, the deepest feelings of our nature as human beings.

Second motive. Devotion to the Passion of our Divine Lord has always had the highest place in the homage the Church and all fervent Christians render Him.

He says Himself in the Apocalypse, "*I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.*" (*Apoc.* xxii. 13). This applies especially to His Sacred Passion, all religion coming forth from, and returning to, this great mystery, and centralizing in it. O, let us listen to St. Paul, and witness the swellings and burstings of his great heart, as he spoke of the Cross and Passion. Quote *Galat.* vi. 14; 1 *Cor.* i. 23; ii. 2; also *Galat.* ii. 19, 20, "*With Christ I am nailed to the cross. I live, now not I; but Christ liveth in me.*"

[A few words of earnest and pathetic comment.]

The devotion of St. Paul has been always the devotion of fervent Christian souls to the Passion of Christ; and in it they found their greatest comfort and support in all their trials and temptations. Let us listen to St. Augustine: "There is nothing that conduces more to the salvation of souls," says this great servant of God, "than always to think upon what the God-man has suffered for us." (*Serm.* iii. *ad Frat. in Erem*). And again, in his *Manual*, "I have not found a more efficacious remedy in my necessities, than the wounds of Jesus Christ." (Chap. 22). He further assures us that, when we pray in the name of our Divine Lord, that is, through His Passion and Death, our prayer is infallible, at least when offered for ourselves. How tender and affecting that prayer, which this holy doctor composed in honour of our Saviour's Passion. How it shows, that like St. Paul, whom he so much admired, he was wrapt up in all the circumstances of this mystery of mysteries. Let us repeat it: "O Lord Jesus Christ, who, to redeem the world, wouldst be born, circumcised, rejected by the Jews, betrayed by Judas the traitor with a kiss, bound with cords, brought ignominiously before Annas, Caiphas, Herod, and Pilate;

accused by false witnesses, torn with scourges, crowned with thorns, struck on the face, defiled with spittle, blindfolded, stripped of Thy clothes, nailed to the cross, lifted up on that cross, placed between two thieves, given vinegar and gall to drink, wounded with a lance, do Thou, O Lord, in virtue of these most sacred sufferings of Thine, which I Thy unworthy servant commemorate, and by Thy Holy Cross and Passion, save me from the pains of hell, and vouchsafe to conduct me whither Thou hast conducted the thief crucified by Thy side, who, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, livest and reignest for ever and ever. Amen." Thus was it that the great and holy doctor, St. Augustine, had always before his eyes the Passion of His Divine Master.

And how speak of our dear Lord's Passion and not recollect the tender-hearted St. Bernard, and his melting devotion towards this great mystery? From his early youth, as he tells us in a sermon to his community, his soul was riveted on the sufferings and death of our Blessed Redeemer; and collecting together a bouquet, or a nosegay, as it were, of all the pangs and sorrows of his suffering Saviour, he laid it up in his breast, so that he might spread abroad wherever he went, and as long as he lived, its sweetness, and its fragrance; in other words, that he might in all his discourses and instructions, mingle reflections and considerations on the Passion for the edification of those who heard him. "Hence," said he, "the subject of my Saviour's Passion is so often in my mouth, as you so well know, and it is constantly in my heart, as God knows, and is the familiar theme of my pen, as every one can witness. Yes, this is my sublimest wisdom, to know my Jesus, and Him crucified." (*Serm.* xlii. *sup. cant.*) And, in the same sermon, as he recommends to his audience devotion to the Passion, he assured them that "there was nothing more efficacious for curing the wounds of our conscience and purifying our souls, than continually to meditate on the sufferings of Jesus Christ." In his prayers, this great saint used to place the Passion of his Divine Master as an all-atoning oblation, between the sins of mankind and the offended justice of God. "O Holy Father," he used to say, "Look down from Thy sanctuary, from Thy sublime throne above in heaven, and behold this most Sacred Victim, which our great High Priest, Thy Divine Son, our Lord Jesus, offers to Thee for the sins of His brethren, and

mercifully pardon the multitude of our iniquities. Acknowledge the garment of this Thy Son, as another Joseph. Alas! an evil beast hath devoured Him, and in its fury hath trampled upon His vesture. Behold the five lamentable rents it hath left in it." (*Serm. de Passione.*)

And the Seraphic Francis: O lover of the Cross of Christ, with St. Paul you were nailed, by compassion, to the cross of your dying Saviour, and therefore deserved to have your hands and feet and side transpierced, as if not only in affection, but in reality, you had undergone your Saviour's crucifixion along with Him.

And St. Bonaventure, another great lover of the Cross, hesitates not to assure us that he, who devoutly applies himself to meditate "on the Life and Death of Jesus Christ, finds there very abundantly all things he stands in need of, and needs to seek for nothing out of Jesus Christ." (*Coll.* 7.)

But why quote individual saints, whom we could multiply beyond number? Has not the Church of Christ, the Church "*which He has purchased with His own blood*" (*Acts* xx. 28), always kept His Passion before the minds of her children, as the mystery of mysteries, displaying at once to all mankind "*the power of God and the wisdom of God?*" (1 *Cor.* i. 24). For what purpose does she erect temples all over the world, and why does she assemble her children in these abodes of religion? Is it not to re-enact in their presence and for their veneration, the great mystery of Calvary? O yes, the mystery of the Altar is the mystery of Calvary. The Victim is the same. The High Priest is the same, represented, indeed, by the mortal man, who celebrates before our eyes, but in whom, and through whom, our Blessed Redeemer re-enacts by His own appointment and institution, the great sacrifice of Calvary. The manner only is different, but essentially and substantially the sacrifice is the same; and therefore it is that all the ceremonies of the Mass are devised and performed to represent, as the priest goes through it, the various stages of the Passion, from the prayer of our Blessed Lord in the Garden to His death on the cross. On this account is it, that the "Imitation of Christ" says to us, "When you assist at Mass, it should appear to you as new and as great, as if, at the time, you were looking at Christ suffering and dying for the salvation of mankind." (Book iv., chap. ii.)

Thus is it, that by the constant representation and re-enacting of His Passion, our Crucified Saviour would be our Alpha and our Omega, our Beginning and our End, our First and our Last; and as His cross is to be our universal resource in all our wants and miseries in this world, so is it to be the great Standard of the Son of Man, when, in the end, He will come in power and majesty, accompanied by His angels, to pronounce judgment upon mankind in the Valley of Josaphat.

And as in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, so also in all her sacred liturgy and forms of prayer, our holy mother the Church keeps constantly before our minds the Passion of her Divine Spouse. This she does by so constantly using the sign of the cross, that St. Augustine says, "if this sacred sign be not formed on the foreheads of those who are baptized, or on the water in which they are regenerated, or on the oil with which they are anointed, or on the sacrifice with which they are fed, nothing in these things is duly performed." (*Tr.* 118, *in Joan. n.* 5).

St. Chrysostom, and the other early Fathers of the Church, speak in the same way; and what the Church practised from the beginning she still continues, as we see in all her public functions, which she concludes, as she does all the prayers she puts into our mouths, by an appeal to the merits of our dear Lord's Passion and Death, saying: "through Christ our Lord," or "through our Lord Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth with Thee in the unity of the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end. Amen." Thus is it that the Church constantly holds up to the view of the faithful "Christ Crucified," as the "Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last" of all that is high and holy, all that is sacred and divine in the Christian Religion.

[Exhort to devotion to the Passion in virtue of the foregoing motives].

2. *Practices of devotion in honour of the Passion of our Divine Lord.*

1st. To assist devoutly at the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. This Holy Sacrifice being the same as the Sacrifice of the Cross, we should go to it with the sentiments we should have had, if we accompanied our Divine Saviour bearing His Cross up the Hill of Calvary, and we should assist at it with the sentiments we should have experienced, were we standing by the side of

His Blessed Mother, St. John, and the devoted Magdalen, as they were looking on the Divine Victim offering Himself on the ignominious gibbet for our sins, and the sins of all mankind. Every one that can should go to Mass on Sundays and Holidays in virtue of the Precept of the Church, but every good Christian should, besides, assist at this Divine Mystery as often as he can from devotion to the Passion.

2ndly. We should remind ourselves constantly of the Passion by the frequent use of the sign of the cross. This was the habit of good Christians from the beginning. Tertullian, in speaking of this habit amongst the early Christians, says, "at every step, when we walk, go out of doors, or come in, when we put on any garment, or our shoes, when we wash ourselves, or go to table, light a lamp or fire, go to bed, or sit down, and whatever other action or conversation we are called to, we sign our foreheads with the sign of the cross." (1 *De Coron.* c. 2.) The saints of God have always used the sign of the cross as a shield of defence, in which they placed unbounded confidence against the attacks of the devil. "Let him, who would make the trial, come," says St. Athanasius, "and in the midst of the enchantments of devils . . . let him but make the sign of the cross . . . and he will immediately see how by it devils are chased away." [Here **recommend** special practices, such as secretly making the sign of the cross when the clock strikes, when one feels himself attacked with any temptation, &c.]

3rdly. We should have emblems of the Passion to look at frequently. The early Christians, as St. Chrysostom tells us, used to paint the cross on their houses, walls, windows, and some of them even on their foreheads, arming themselves with the sacred symbol. **Recommend** crucifixes, and pictures of the crucifix in houses, and especially in bed-chambers; also little pictures in prayer-books, and little crucifixes to be carried on one's person in suspending it from around the neck, &c.

4thly. We should have some devotions on Friday in honour of the Passion. The Church makes that day a day of abstinence in commemoration of the Passion, and every good Christian should add some special devotions of his own. **Recommend** the devotion of the Stations of the Cross, where convenient, five Paters, and five Aves, and five Gloria Patris,

in honour of the five bleeding wounds, three Paters and three Aves, and three Gloria Patris, in honour of the Three Hours' Agony, &c.

Conclusion.

Conclude by an exhortation in accordance with the motives, using them to recommend the practice of devotion to the Passion.

Consult Rodriguez, "Christian Perfection," vol. 2, 7th Treat., chap. 2; also Butler's "Feasts and Fasts, Holy Week."

THE LORD'S PRAYER.

FIRST DISCOURSE.

"*And it came to pass, that as He was in a certain place praying, when He ceased, one of His disciples said to Him: Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples.*"—Luke xi. 1.

Introduction.

We have been treating of the subject of Prayer under various general views of it. We have seen its necessity and its efficacy, as also the conditions required to render our prayers acceptable at the throne of the Most High. We have further considered the Passion of our Divine Lord, and seen that it is by the merits of His Passion that we have access to God's mercy when we pray. We proceed now to enter upon the consideration of that special form of Prayer, that Prayer of Prayers, which our Blessed Saviour Himself vouchsafed to teach His Apostles, and which is the precious inheritance of the Christian faithful to the end of time. Need I mention that I allude to the Lord's Prayer, so called because taught by our Divine Lord Himself. Our text tells us the occasion. He was Himself praying; His disciples were looking on; His example inflamed them with the desire of praying likewise, but they wished to have a prayer of His own special teaching. They accordingly ventured to ask Him, "*Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples:*" whereupon complying graciously with their request, "*He said to them: When you pray, say: Our Father, who art in heaven,*" &c., dictating to them the seven

petitions of the Lord's Prayer. For our present subject we shall find sufficient matter in the words I have quoted, "*Our Father, who art in heaven,*" which form the preface or introduction to the petitions of the prayer, premising a few observations on the excellence of the prayer in a general view of it.

[A few words to invite attention, after which invoke a blessing.]

BODY OF THE SUBJECT.

1. *The excellence of the Lord's Prayer.*

1st. On account of its author. Not composed by a Priest, or a Bishop, a Pope or an Apostle, but by our Divine Lord Himself, who knew what graces and favours we stand in need of and are most advantageous to us, and, therefore, included them in the petitions of the prayer. He knew besides the form of prayer that would be most acceptable to His Heavenly Father, and consequently gave us words according to that form; and what is still more consoling, when we offer up that Divine Prayer with the proper dispositions, it is He that prays by our mouth, so that we have the fullest assurance of realizing through Him what He elsewhere promises, that "*If we ask the Father anything in His name, He will give it to us.*" (*John* xvi. 23). How should we not value a prayer, which is so efficacious, &c.?

2ndly. It is all comprehensive. It comprises all our wants, spiritual and corporal, for time and eternity. All other prayers are comprised in it, and although so short in form, volumes might be written, and they would fall short of fully explaining all that is contained in it. How, therefore, should we not esteem a prayer which sends up to the throne of grace in such few words all we want or need wish for. With every reason, therefore, does our dear Saviour say to us: "*When you are praying, speak not much, as the heathens. For they think that in their much speaking they may be heard.*" (*Matt.* vi. 7). How consoling to reflect, that a poor illiterate man or woman, who knows only the Lord's Prayer, can, in using that prayer alone, pray very often better than the learned and the highly educated Christian, who may be using a dozen of prayer-books, &c.

3rdly. The Lord's Prayer not only contains all our wants, and all we are to wish for, but puts forward our wants and wishes in due and proper order, so that what should be first is first, what should be second is second, &c.; our

Blessed Lord thus teaching us the relative degrees of importance we are to attach to the various petitions, as they follow one after the other. In this respect also the Lord's Prayer has a high claim on our esteem, &c., teaching us, as it does, the order in which we are to appreciate the concerns that should interest us, as we appear before God in prayer.

[Exhortation to respect and esteem for the Lord's Prayer, whence proceed to the subject.]

2. We now proceed to our subject as contained in the words, "*Our Father, who art in heaven,*" which, as I have mentioned, form the preface or introduction to the Lord's Prayer. It is short, as the Catechism of the Council of Trent observes; short, if we look to the words, but looking to what it contains, it is most important, and full of mystery. And first, let us consider the word *Father*. Our Divine Saviour could have said *Creator* instead, or *Lord*, or some other word conveying more strikingly the idea of God's Majesty; and, indeed, in the Old Testament, "*Lord*" is the word generally used in speaking of or praying to God. But this and similar words give the idea rather of fear; and he was pleased to put into our mouth the loving word "*Father*," to inspire us with love and confidence, in consideration of the affection and indulgent regard expressed in the name *Father*. And is He not our Father? Yes, and more our Father than the earthly being we call by that title, He is our Father by creation, He is our Father by preservation, He is our Father by redemption, &c.

Explain each title in detail, showing how, and mentioning especially the guardianship of His angels, and that He never loses sight of us, or puts off the love and concern of a *Father*, in our regard, much though we offend Him by our sins, "*making His sun to rise upon the good and the bad,*" as He "*raineth upon the just and the unjust,*" (*Matt.* v. 45), and retains the bowels of a *Father's* love towards the Prodigal, much though he has offended and gone astray.

In the title *Father* is included the title of children, so that when we call God our Father, we are to consider ourselves his children, and we are to approach Him in prayer with all the confidence this endearing title inspires. We are indeed, His children, not in being called so, but in being really so, as St. John says (1 *John* iii. 1), and we have the privilege, the

sublime privilege, of being so in the several respects in which He is our *Father*.

Hence inculcate the duties we owe to God as children, such as love, piety, obedience, reverence, &c., to the most loving Father.

As children of God our Father, we are all brothers. The distinctions this world makes between men are effaced, and we are all members of the same great family under God as our universal Father. How sublime this conception. But we are brothers not only in reference to each other, but we are so in the brotherhood of Jesus Christ. Yes, in becoming man, He made Himself our brother. He calls Himself everywhere in the Gospel the Son of Man, and His disciples He terms His brethren, "*Go to My brethren, and say to them*," said He to Magdalen, after His resurrection. But this is not all, for being brethren of Christ, we are also heirs with Him to an everlasting kingdom, the Kingdom of Heaven. This is the blessed assurance St. Paul gives us, saying: "*And if sons, heirs also, heirs indeed of God, and joint-heirs with Christ.*" (*Rom.* viii. 17.) What a happiness! And this happiness is guaranteed to us in God being our Father, as we are taught to call Him in the Lord's Prayer, saying: "Our Father."

We now proceed to consider the word "*our*" before Father, so that, though we may pray separately, we do not say *my* Father, but *our* Father. We have here a great lesson taught us by our Divine Lord. It is the lesson of fraternal charity, which He calls His own special Commandment, saying to us in the Gospel. "*This is* MY *Commandment, that you love one another, as I have loved you.*" (*John* xv. 12.) This Commandment we put in practice as we commence the Lord's Prayer, praying not only for ourselves, but for all mankind, even our enemies and those who differ from us in religion, without exception or exclusion of a single human being on earth, or in purgatory. How enchanting the thought of each individual of the great human family, as he presents himself before God, as a son before a most loving father, and praying for his brethren, as sons of the same Father, "*the Father of lights, from whom every best gift, every perfect gift comes down*" upon this world (*James* i.17). What evils do we not avert from each other by thus mutually praying for each other? What benefits and blessings do we not obtain for each other, and, as we include poor sinners in our prayers—

sinners, who, perhaps, do not pray at all for themselves, or others—what graces do we not draw down upon them to bring them to repentance, and reconcile them with that ever merciful Father, "*who wills not their death, but that they be converted and live?*" (*Ezec.* xxxiii. 11.) How full of meaning and heavenly significance is not the word "*our*," as, instead of "*my Father*," we say "*our Father*," in reciting the Lord's Prayer.

The next words are "*who art in heaven.*" These words, too, are most significant, and contain several important lessons worthy of our Divine Lord. They lift up our hearts from earth to heaven, to aspire to our last end and our supreme happiness, the happiness for which we were created, the happiness for which we are redeemed, the happiness God, our Father, has in reserve for us, "*having prepared it for us from the foundation of the world.*" (*Matt.* xxv. 34) But we are, at the same time, to bear in mind that God is everywhere by His immensity, that "*He fills heaven and earth,*" as the prophet teaches us (*Jer.* xxiii. 24); that He is totally and entirely present everywhere, in all and each of the works of His hands, ruling them by His power, and maintaining them in existence by His all-sustaining hand. (Here quote *Ps.* cxxxviii. 7, 8, 9, 10); and observe what a restraint on temptation, what an encouragement to virtue, what a consolation in affliction is the recollection of God being present as a Father, with the bowels of affection, &c., for us. Quote also *ibid.* 11, 12, to show the stupidity and folly of the sinner seeking the loneliness of solitude, or the darkness of night, to commit deeds of darkness, which he would not commit in presence of his fellow-man, as if God had not His eyes open upon him to see his guilt, as clearly by night as by day, as fully in the secret recesses he has sought out for his sinful conduct, as in the open plain or public highway.

But our Blessed Saviour, in dictating the Lord's Prayer, says, "*in heaven:*" "*Our Father, who art in heaven.*" Besides the reasons already mentioned, of lifting up our thoughts and affections to heaven, as our last end, our Divine Lord had other reasons still. *In the first place,* whilst the Scriptures tell us of God's immensity, by which He is everywhere present, present by His essence or being, present by His knowledge of all things, and present by His power sustaining and ruling all creation, yet, they speak of Him as having His special abode in heaven. Our

Divine Lord, in giving us the Lord's Prayer, wished to put before us the same idea.

In the second place, He would have us look up to the heavens, as the noblest portion of the world, engaging our admiration by their magnitude and beauty, and the heavenly bodies careering in glory, with fixed laws to regulate their motions in the firmament, thereby manifesting the power and majesty of God, "*our Father*," Who created them and rules over them. Thus we are made to say with the Psalmist: "*The Heavens show forth the glory of God, and the firmament declareth the work of His hands.*" (*Ps.* xviii. 2.)

And in the third place, our Divine Lord would have us always understand that heaven is to be the constant and primary object of our prayers, and that everything else we pray for should be subject to the condition of its conducing ultimately and eventually to our gaining heaven, to reign there with "*our Father*," Who whilst everywhere, reserves heaven to manifest Himself in all His glory to His angels and His elect. Thus, St. Paul would say to us: "*Therefore, if you be risen with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God: mind the things that are above, not the things that are upon the earth.*" (*Colos.* iii. 1, 2.)

Conclusion.

Conclude by exhorting your audience, when reciting the Lord's Prayer, to lift themselves up in spirit above all things here below, and transport themselves in spirit before the throne of God in heaven, to say to Him: "*Our Father, who art in heaven*," "*looking for the blessed hope and coming of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ.*" (*Tit.* ii. 13.)

Consult Catechism of the Council of Trent, chap. ix. *De Oratione Dominica.*

THE LORD'S PRAYER.

FIRST PETITION.

"*Hallowed be Thy Name.*"

Introduction.

In our last discourse we considered the preface or introduction to the Lord's Prayer, set forth in the words, "*Our Father, who art in heaven :*" and we saw how our Divine Lord would, at once, raise our thoughts and affections to God, under the amiable title of Father, how we are to approach him under this title, not only on our own account individually, but on account of each other mutually, as members of the great human family, of which He is the universal Father; and, therefore, we are to say to Him, not *my* Father, but *our* Father, including thereby all mankind as our brethren in our prayers; and we saw, finally, how we are to look up to heaven as the seat of our Father's glory, where we hope to be happy with Him in singing His praises for ever and ever.

From this introduction we proceed at present to the first petition of the Lord's Prayer contained in our text, "*Hallowed be Thy Name.*" These words are, indeed, few, but they abound in heavenly significance. We will approach the consideration of them, in God's name, with all reverence and piety, begging of our Blessed God, who has put these words into our mouths, to enable us to understand, at least in some degree, their meaning, that we may use them with greater fervour, and bring down a larger measure of blessing upon ourselves when we recite this Divine Prayer.

Body of the Subject.

1. "*Hallowed be Thy Name.*" Blessed words, by which we pray the name of God our Father to be "hallowed" or sanctified. We have had occasion already to observe that the Lord's Prayer not only contains everything we are to pray for, but disposes the various petitions, of which it is composed, in the order in which we should present them. Thus is it, that as we present ourselves in the quality of children before God as

our Father, our first and uppermost feeling, because the most natural feeling of our hearts, should be, that His adorable Name would be more and more sanctified, more and more blessed and glorified. This is the order of charity, by which we are to love God our Father above all things, even above ourselves, "*with our whole hearts, with our whole souls, with our whole minds, and with all our strength*" (*Mark* xii. 30), as our Blessed Lord Himself teaches us.

2. In considering this first petition of the Lord's Prayer, we are to notice that our Divine Saviour teaches us not to say, "be *Thou* hallowed" or sanctified, but let *Thy Name* be "hallowed" or sanctified, "*Hallowed be Thy Name*," thus making a distinction between our Heavenly Father Himself, and His ever-adorable Name. The distinction merits our particular attention. Let us try, with God's blessing, to understand it. When we speak of God Himself personally, we mean to speak of His Divine nature—His Divine perfections. In other words, we mean to speak of Him, as He is in Himself. Now, the petition "*Hallowed be Thy Name*," is not offered to Him in this sense, because God, according to His Divine nature, because God, according to His Divine perfections, because God, as He is in Himself, is all holy, infinitely holy, and therefore His personal holiness is incapable of increase, and leaves us consequently no room to pray that He be more and more "*hallowed*" or sanctified. But it is otherwise as regards His adorable Name. His adorable Name is not Himself. It is outside Himself, consisting of the honour and glory He receives, and is entitled to receive from all creatures, somewhat in the same way as an honourable title here on earth, such as Prince, King, or Emperor, comprises the respect and honour these distinguished personages receive, and are entitled to receive, from their subjects or dependents. Now this external honour and glory of God, this sanctity coming from without, from outside of God Himself, is capable of immense, of never-ending increase, and this is what we pray for when we say in the first petition of the Lord's Prayer, "*Hallowed be Thy Name*," wishing and desiring that all the creatures of God, throughout the universe, would combine and unite in praising, blessing, and glorifying His holy Name for ever and ever.

3. In praying, therefore, that the Name of our Heavenly Father be "*hallowed*" or sanctified by all creatures, we desire

to ascend on the wings of faith and love to the kingdom of His glory, and unite our homages with those of the blessed spirits, who encircle His eternal throne, singing unceasingly: "*Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty, Who was, and Who is, and Who is to come. Thou art worthy, O Lord our God, to receive glory, and honour, and power; because Thou hast created all things, and for Thy will they have been created.*" (*Apoc.* iv. 8, 11.) O, how should we not continually sigh and pray with the Psalmist: "*Who will give me wings like a dove, and I will fly?*" (*Ps.* liv. 7). O yes, how we should desire to have our sojourning here on earth cut short, that we might join in the heavenly chorus of praise and benediction, with which the ever-adorable Name of our Heavenly Father is sanctified in the mansions of His glory.

4. But, we are here on earth, in this land of exile, and as the children of Israel seated by the rivers of Babylon, we sigh from afar after our heavenly Sion (*Ps.* cxxxvi. 1), awaiting the glory to come, that is to be revealed in us. Nevertheless, our Divine Lord would have us commence here below what, through His mercy, is to be our never-ending occupation in heaven, hallowing and blessing our Heavenly Father's Name. O, we should never be tired repeating the Divine words, "*Hallowed be Thy Name.*" In the words of St. Bernard, they should be "honey in our mouths, music in our ears, and joy in our hearts." They are everywhere repeated in one form or another throughout the Scriptures. The Psalmist could never tire in expressing them. It was the constant burden of his song to repeat, "*Blessed be the Name of the Lord.*" "*O Lord, our Lord, how admirable is Thy Name in the whole earth.*" "*Let His Name be blessed for ever more.*" Hundreds of such passages might be quoted, in which the Royal Psalmist, inspired by God, gave forth the utterings of his heart in blessing God's holy Name; and not satisfied with the homages he was able to render it in person, he invited the whole world to join him saying: "*The Lord is great in Sion, and great above all people, let them give praise to Thy great Name;*" and, in the 148th psalm, after having called upon the angels of heaven, and with them the sun and moon, the stars and light, the heavens of heavens, and the waters that are above the heavens, he invoked the fire, hail, snow, ice, stormy winds, mountains, and hills, fruitful trees, and cedars, beasts and cattle, serpents and feathered fowls; and then addressing himself to the kings of the earth and all people,

princes and all the judges of the earth, to young men and maidens, the old and the young, he invited them to join in a universal chorus, praising the Name of the Lord, because, said he, "*His Name alone is exalted.*"

In a similar way, all the other inspired writers magnify the ever-adorable Name of God; and the saints of every age, under the New, as well as the Old Dispensation, had ever the Name of the Lord on their lips, to hallow and sanctify it. Therefore, the Name of our Heavenly Father should never depart from our hearts; it should be constantly on our lips. In that holy Name we should begin all we undertake, and every act of our lives should receive a special consecration by being done in God's holy Name. We should constantly appeal to our soul within us, saying: "*Bless the Lord, O my soul, and let all that is within me bless His holy Name.*" (*Ps.* cii. i.)

5. But in saying "*Hallowed be Thy Name,*" we are to remember that we have a duty of reparation to render to our Heavenly Father's Name. Alas! that Divine Name is not sufficiently honoured amongst us, sinful mortals. Alas! it is too often dishonoured, profaned, outraged, by cursing and swearing, by imprecations and blasphemy. Can a dutiful son stand by and hear the name of a loving father ill-treated in this manner, without resenting it? And what is to be our resentment when we hear the name of our Father, who is in heaven, outraged by our fellow-creatures? Oh, our resentment should find its effect in making Him reparation, in blessing and hallowing more and more His ever adorable Name in our hearts, with our mouths, with every demonstration of worship, imitating, as far as our lowliness will permit, the angels of heaven, in the glory, and honour, and benediction they unceasingly render to the ever-blessed Name of their "King, immortal and invisible," whose eternal throne it is their happiness to encircle night and day in the kingdom of His glory.

6. This petition, "*Hallowed be Thy Name,*" should also remind us that there are yet on earth nations of our fellow-beings "*seated in darkness and the shadow of death*" (*Luke* i. 79), who know not the holy Name of Him who created them, and maintains them constantly in existence. In putting forward our petition, and saying "*Hallowed be Thy Name,*" we pray for these poor benighted human beings, that God may be pleased mercifully to bring them to the knowledge of His holy Name,

that they may praise and sanctify it. Our blessed Lord, speaking of St. Paul, in his miraculous conversion, said to Ananias, "*This man is to Me a vessel of election, to carry My Name before the gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel.*" (*Acts* ix. 15). Blessed be God, we have in the Church of God, at present, legions of holy missioners, who are "vessels of election," carrying God's holy Name to the uttermost boundaries of the globe, spending and re-spending themselves, and counting their lives as worthless, except in so far as they can fulfil their ministry in making the Name of their great Master and Father in heaven more and more known, more and more blessed here upon earth. Happy allotment! Valiant souls, whose names are written in the Book of Life! But we must not be mere admirers of their zeal, their courage, their labours and privations. We should assist them by our prayers and our alms. We should enrol ourselves in the Society for the Propagation of the Faith, in order to share in some degree in the great merit they are treasuring up in heaven. Should we not rejoice in thinking that, as members of this blessed Association, our prayers and our alms follow those heroic soldiers of Christ, who are advancing His standard into regions hitherto under the empire of Satan, and making known the Name of the true God amongst populations who hitherto prostituted that Name to sticks and stones, the work of their own hands.

But who does not know that the conduct of our lives, if we live as we ought to live, or if we live as we ought not to live, has much to do with the hallowing or sanctifying of God's Name, either to promote or to hinder this great purpose. If the Psalmist called upon inanimate objects in the firmament above, on the earth here below, and even in the depths of the sea, to bless and glorify the adorable Name of the Lord, with much more reason may we appeal to mankind to render Him this homage by the conduct of their lives. Alas! how many are there amongst us, who say every day, and several times a day, "*Hallowed be Thy Name*," who, nevertheless, dishonour that blessed Name by the conduct of their lives, and who, if amongst gentiles or pagans, would give occasion for the complaint made by St. Paul in his day, to the effect that on account of their conduct, "*the Name of God was blasphemed amongst the gentiles.*" (*Rom.* ii. 24). Alas! the complaint is renewed in our day. The apostolic men, who on the foreign missions are labouring

to advance the standard of salvation, complain bitterly that their greatest difficulty is often, not the ignorance and prejudices of the poor heathens they are endeavouring to convert, but the disedifying lives and manners of Christians, who dishonour their profession, and give scandal to the simple, unsophisticated natives. On the contrary, were they to live, as they ought to live, in conformity with their religious obligations, what a help would not their lives be to the efforts of the missioners in their Apostolic work. If, therefore, we say, "*Hallowed be Thy Name*," our conduct must not be in contradiction with our prayer, for our Saviour tells us that "*not every one that saith to Him, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven.*" In vain will they say that they prophesied in His Name, and cast out devils in His Name, and worked miracles in His Name. His reply will be, "*Depart from Me, you workers of iniquity.*" (*Matt.* vii. 22, 23).

Conclusion.

We will conclude with sentiments in accord with our subject, O, "*hallowed*" be the Name of our Heavenly Father. May all the angels and saints of heaven bless and sanctify His ever-blessed Name! May all God's servants here on earth join in the heavenly chorus, and say, Blessed for ever be that adorable Name! Let each of us appeal to his own soul, and say with the Psalmist: "*O my soul, bless the Lord; and let all that is within me bless His Holy Name.*" (*Ps.* cii. 1). And, whilst we pray for the Name to be hallowed, sanctified, and glorified, we are not to forget that we are, at the same time, bringing down blessings on ourselves from this Father of lights, and God of all consolation, for it is the law of nature, that every duty of respect, every act of reverence a dutiful son performs towards a loving parent, induces that parent to grant him new favours, new proofs of his bounty. Therefore, benedictions upon benedictions will be showered down upon us from heaven in return for the pleasure we give our Heavenly Father by honouring and sanctifying His adorable Name, and the homage we pay to it here on earth, will entitle us to be admitted to His heavenly kingdom, to mingle our voices with the heavenly choirs in chanting its praises for ever and ever.

Consult Catechism of the Council of Trent (*de Orat. Dom.*)

THE LORD'S PRAYER.

SECOND PETITION.

"*Thy Kingdom come.*"

Introduction.

After having disposed of the first petition of the Lord's Prayer, we proceed in order to the second, contained in the words, "*Thy Kingdom come.*" God is our Father, He is also our King; and whilst, therefore, we are His children, we are also His subjects, depending on the absolute and unlimited authority He has over us. The two titles consequently of Father and King are blended in His relation towards us, as the duties of children and subjects are united in our relation to Him. Therefore, after having said to Him with filial affection, "*Hallowed be Thy Name,*" we go on to say with the loyalty of liege subjects, "*Thy Kingdom come.*" It cannot but be interesting in the highest degree to reflect on this petition of the Lord's Prayer, which lifts up our minds to the throne of God's Majesty in heaven, to contemplate that "*King of ages, immortal and invisible,*" who reigneth for ever and ever. But conscious of our own insufficiency, and that of ourselves we can do nothing, let us beg of the Father of lights to shed His light upon our souls, to guide us in the reflections we are going to make, so that when reciting the Lord's Prayer, we may pronounce the petition "*Thy Kingdom come,*" in the spirit our dear Lord desired in making it a portion of His prayer.

Body of the Subject.

1. "*Thy Kingdom come.*" Blessed words, as they proceed from our lips, and penetrate the clouds, ascending to the throne of God our Father, Who is in heaven. The kingdom of God is the beginning and end of the preaching of the Gospel of Christ. The preaching of John the Baptist began by announcing "*the kingdom of heaven to be at hand.*" (*Matt.* iii. 2). Our Divine Saviour Himself commenced His preaching in the same way. The first words of His public preaching were, "*Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*" (*Matt.* v. 3). He proclaimed this to be the end and

purpose of His mission on earth, to preach the kingdom of God; "*I must preach the kingdom of God*," says He, and He immediately adds, "*for therefore am I sent*." (*Luke* iv. 43). In nearly all His parables He commenced by referring to the kingdom of heaven, saying the kingdom of heaven was like the subject of the parable. And, as this was His own mission from His Heavenly Father, so likewise was it the mission He confided to His Apostles, telling them to preach the kingdom of heaven was at hand (*Matt.* x. 7); and, during the forty days that He remained on earth after His Resurrection, the constant subject of His discourses with His Apostles was the kingdom of God. (*Acts* i. 3). Therefore are we authorised to say, that the entire Gospel, that is, the preaching of the Gospel, should turn upon the subject of the second petition of the Lord's Prayer, "*Thy Kingdom come.*"

2. But why do we pray for God's kingdom to come? Has it not come? Has it not existed from the beginning? Does it not exist at present, and will it not exist for all eternity? The petition, therefore, needs explanation. We may view a kingdom in two different lights; first, in reference to the king, whose kingdom it is, and secondly, in reference to the subjects composing his kingdom. Now if we speak of the kingdom of God in the former sense, that is, in reference to God Himself, as King of His own kingdom, we do not pray that His kingdom come in that sense at all. Because, independently of our prayers, and independently of everything else, "*He is King of kings, and Lord of lords.*" (1 *Tim.* vi. 15). "*King of ages, immortal and invisible.*" (1 *Tim.* i. 17). "*Almighty being His name.*" (*Exod.* xv. 3). He is not only independent of all creation, but necessarily so, by the essential necessity of His being. Therefore, when we say and pray, "*Thy Kingdom come*," we do not mean the kingdom of God in reference to God Himself, as if there were any question of His supreme authority as Lord and Master of the universe. We speak in quite another sense, when we say in the Lord's Prayer, "*Thy Kingdom come.*" We speak of God's kingdom with regard to ourselves, and our subjection to Him, as our Supreme Sovereign, and our prayer is, that He be more and more respected, more and more honoured, and more and more obeyed by mankind: in a word, that He reign in our hearts by the voluntary subjection, and voluntary allegiance we owe His Divine Majesty. In this view of the kingdom of God, we find reason

to lament, that we are so much wanting in our allegiance towards Him, that so many poor mortals throw off His allegiance altogether, and allow themselves to become the slaves of the devil, the world, and their own corrupt inclinations. We have reason still more to lament, at seeing how the sovereigns of the world are served by their subjects, especially by the courtiers they have around them, and, on the contrary, how ill God is served by those even who pray every day of their lives, and several times a day, "*Thy Kingdom come.*"

3. God's kingdom in our regard is twofold, of this world, and the world to come, and we comprise both kingdoms in our prayer when we say "*Thy Kingdom come.*" With regard to this world, we beg that God would maintain His kingdom in our hearts by His grace. Yes, we are truly His subjects, and He is truly our King, as long as we are in a state of grace. We, therefore, can pray for nothing better for us in this world than that God would so reign in us by His grace, and that we even in this life, should be His loyal and devoted subjects by giving ourselves to Him to reign in this manner in us. With regard to the world to come, we mean to beg of God when we say "*Thy Kingdom come,*" that He would at the close of our career here on earth, admit us to His heavenly kingdom, there to chant His praises in company with the elect, partaking of His own happiness, according to the words of our dear Saviour Himself, "*enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.*" (*Matt.* xxv. 21). With what fervour should we not pour out a petition, which our Blessed Lord has put into our mouth, to pray for so glorious a destiny, the kingdom of God in heaven, and our enjoyment of the happiness of that kingdom with God Himself for ever!

4. Whilst we pray, that the kingdom of God may be established by grace in our hearts, we are not to forget that we pray to Him as a Father, and a most loving Father, as well as our King. In this twofold quality nothing escapes His Divine Providence, that would be to our advantage. On this account our Divine Saviour would have us to free ourselves from all undue solicitude for the things of this world, because, says He, "*your Father knoweth that you have need of all these things,*" and then He immediately adds: "*Seek ye, therefore, first the kingdom of God and His justice, and all these things shall be added unto you.*" (*Matt.* vi. 32, 33). We have then a compact instituted by our Divine Lord between our Heavenly Father and ourselves:

a compact to the effect, that if we look after the things that relate to His kingdom, He will, as a most bountiful Father, look after our temporal interests here below, and by the action of His Providence, "*which reaches from end to end mightily, and disposes of all things sweetly*" (*Wisd.* viii. 1), provide for us whatever we stand in need of for our life in this world.

5. But when we pray, that God may be pleased to reign in our hearts by His grace in this life, we are to recollect that we must place no obstacles in the way. His kingdom must be a reign of love by which we surrender our hearts to His holy grace within us. We must, therefore, put away sin and all affection to sin. The Ark of the Covenant, and Dagon, could not be together in the same temple. In the same way God and Satan cannot reign together in our hearts. We must give up our whole heart to God. He will not have a divided heart, and His reign in our hearts must be "*a reign of justice and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost*," as St. Paul expressly tells us. (*Rom.* xiv. 17). This justice, of which the Apostle speaks, is not to be taken in the restricted sense of the virtue of justice, by which we are disposed to give every one his own, but in the larger sense, as comprising all Christian virtue, according to our Saviour's words to St. John the Baptist: "*It becometh us to fulfil all justice.*" (*Matt.* iii. 15). It comprises especially the Divine virtues of Faith, Hope, and Charity, whereby, with the blessings of peace and the joy of the Holy Ghost, "*the kingdom of God*," as our Saviour says, "*is within you*" (*Luke* xvii. 21), so that, as St. Paul says of himself: "*I live, now not I; but Christ liveth in me*" (*Gal.* ii. 20), we may be able to say, I reign, now not I; but God reigneth in me. O, how happy should we be to have the kingdom of God thus established within us, in this life by His grace, that we may enjoy the kingdom of His glory in the life to come.

6. But the petition, "*Thy Kingdom come*," takes us up to heaven, and in reciting it we pray for the attainment of the kingdom of God's glory in the world to come. This is the end of our being, the end for which we were created, the end for which we were redeemed, the end for which so many means of sanctification are provided for us; the end, in fine, so necessary for us, that, should we be so unfortunate as not to attain it, it would be better for us, as our Saviour said of the unfortunate Judas, that we never were born.

We are, therefore, to put the kingdom of God's glory before

our minds as the chief object of our petition, when, addressing ourselves to our Heavenly Father, we say "*Thy Kingdom come.*" We will do so the more earnestly, if we bear in mind that our condition here is that of pilgrims and strangers, making our way through miseries on every side, according to the words of holy Job: "*Man born of a woman, living for a short time, is filled with many miseries.*" (*Job* xiv. 1). Not only is our life a miserable one here on earth, but it is a life beset with dangers of soul and body. As to our poor souls, we are in constant war with three great and implacable enemies, the devil, who goeth about as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour; the world, which is leading, as if in fetters, the greater part of mankind on the broad road that ends in eternal ruin; and our corrupt nature, which is all the more dangerous because a domestic enemy, a part of our very existence, and nevertheless, leagued with the world and the devil in ceaseless and mortal hostility against us. In the midst of these miseries and dangers, should we not say with the prophet, "*Woe is me, that my sojourning is prolonged! My soul hath been long a sojourner*" (*Ps.* cxix. 5); or, with St. Paul we should ejaculate with longing sighs, "*Unhappy man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?*" (*Rom.* vii. 24). With hearts uplifted, therefore, towards the heavenly kingdom, we should ask its coming when we say, "*Thy Kingdom come.*"

7. In another sense still do we pray for God's kingdom to come. It is in the sense of His Church being His kingdom here on earth. Yes, His Church is His kingdom organised in due form as a kingdom in this world, He being King omnipotent and supreme. We pray, therefore, that this His kingdom, in other words, His Church, be more and more extended, and nations seated in darkness may be made partakers of her admirable light, that pagans, Jews, heretics, and schismatics may be converted, and enter into the true fold under the one only shepherd, and become united with us "*into the unity of faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, that they may cease to be tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine.*" (*Ephes.* iv. 13, 14).

Conclusion.

How comprehensive, therefore, is this second petition of the Lord's Prayer! How worthy is it of our Divine Lord, our great Master and Teacher, and how salutary to us poor mortals! Let us, therefore, expand our hearts, as we repeat the words with

our lips, fervently praying that God would reign over us and in us, that He would rule our destinies for this world and the next, according to His own good pleasure; that He would beat down the empire of Satan amongst men, that He would make us obedient to His government of us, and faithful in the observance of His laws, His commandments, and His counsels, so that we may, on leaving this world, be prepared to present ourselves with confidence before the sight of our Heavenly King, to be placed by Him in possession of that ever glorious Kingdom, in which He reigneth with the Son and the Holy Ghost for all eternity. Amen.

Consult Catechism of the Council of Trent (*de Orat. Dom.*)

THE LORD'S PRAYER.

THIRD PETITION.

"*Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.*"

Introduction.

As we have already noticed, the Lord's Prayer is composed of seven petitions. We are to consider in this discourse the third petition, announced in the words, "*Thy will be done*," *&c.* Like the other petitions, this petition is very comprehensive. It reaches to the throne of God in heaven, and comes down to His footstool here on earth, praying that His blessed and adorable will be everywhere accomplished. We have, consequently, a copious subject before us, and as important as it is copious.

Let us, therefore, lift up our hearts on high, and fixing our thoughts on "*the Immortal King of ages*," let us beg of Him to supply our inability, and grant us the grace to reflect on His sacred will, so that, in reciting the Lord's Prayer, we may say, with worthy dispositions, the special Petition, "*Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.*"

Body of the Subject.

1. In the second petition of the Lord's Prayer we lift up our souls to God's kingdom in heaven, and aspire to it, as the abode

of our own happiness. We should, therefore, be glad to know by what means we are to attain this blissful destination. Our Divine Saviour tells us, by saying: "*Not every one that saith to Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doth the will of My Father who is in heaven, he shall enter into the kingdom of heaven.*" (*Matt.* vii. 21). We see, therefore, how our Divine Lord has arranged the petitions of the prayer He has taught us, so that they come one after another in regular order: for naturally, looking up to heaven, as the abode of our supreme happiness, we should desire to know the way that leads to it. Our blessed Lord, therefore, points out to us this way, and makes it the object of our prayer, when we say: "*Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.*"

2. But we must consider what is meant by the will of God. The will of God is threefold; His absolute will, or, as we otherwise term it, His will of good pleasure, His will of precept, and His will of counsel, and when we say "*Thy will be done*," we mean God's will, under these three aspects of it. It will be necessary, therefore, to consider each of these aspects apart, and in order, beginning with the absolute will of God, or His will of good pleasure.

3. God's absolute will, or His will of good pleasure, is that by which He plans and carries out what He decides upon doing, independently of any other will, or the will of any other agent that might concur with Him. It is this will He employed in the creation of the universe. It is this will also He exercises in the government of the world, and in all other things that we ascribe to the immediate action of His divine power. But how can we pray for this absolute will of God to be done? Is it not irresistible? Do we not all say, as Mardochai said of old, "*O Lord, Lord, Almighty King, there is none that can resist Thy will*" (*Esther* xiii. 9), and with St. Paul: "*Who resisteth His will?*" (*Rom.* ix. 19). But, we are to understand that the will of God, whilst absolute, as far as God is concerned, has its effect upon His creatures, and upon the destinies and concerns of mankind, and then our petition, when we say, "*Thy will be done*," in the absolute view of God's will, is that we would submit to it, that we would be resigned to it, that we would conform ourselves to it, and that from our inmost soul we would say, according to the universal prayer: "I will, O Lord, whatsoever thou willest, and because Thou willest it, and in the manner Thou

willest it, and as long as Thou willest it." It is in the same sense we pray with the pious author of the "Imitation of Christ:" "Let Thy will be mine, O Lord, and let my will always follow Thine, and be in perfect conformity with it. Be it one thing with me to will or not to will together with Thee, and not to be capable of willing, or not willing, but what Thou willest, or dost not will."

This entire union of our will with God's holy will is, indeed, easy, when what God wills is pleasing and agreeable to us, according to our natural desires and feelings. But, when it is otherwise, when it is opposed to our natural inclinations, then we often experience difficulty in conforming ourselves to this adorable will, and only too often murmur against it, and complain of its dispositions and appointments in our regard. On this account it is necessary for us to consider the motives we have of embracing God's holy will in all circumstances, but more especially in circumstances opposed to our natural feelings, and trying to our poor human nature.

4. *Motives for submission, resignation, and conformity to God's holy will in all the occurrences of life, and especially in all kinds of adversity.*

First motive: The will of God itself. It is always just, holy, and perfect, as God Himself is just, holy, and perfect, and, therefore, we are to say, at all times, with the Psalmist: "*The judgments of the Lord are true, justified in themselves*" (*Ps.* xviii. 10), or with Tobias: "*Thou art just, O Lord, and all Thy judgments are just*" (*Tob.* iii. 2); or, with the angel in the Apocalypse, crying out from the altar of God: "*Yea, O Lord God Almighty, true and just are Thy judgments.*" (*Apoc.* xvi. 7).

Second motive: The will of God is the will of a Father, and a most tender Father in our regard as His children. "*Behold,*" says St. John, "*what manner of charity the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called, and should be the sons of God.*" (1 *John* iii. 1). Not only has He the affection of a Father, but also the tenderness of a mother, in our regard. Does He not say to us Himself: "*Can a woman forget her infant so as not to have pity on the son of her womb? and if she should forget, yet will not I forget thee.*" (*Isai.* xlix. 15).

But, will it be said, that God deals with us sometimes very severely, and chastises us with rigour? St. Paul would answer the complaint: "*Whom the Lord loveth,*" says the Apostle, "*He*

chastiseth; and He scourgeth every son whom He receiveth. . . . God dealeth with you as with His sons, for what son is there whom the father doth not correct?" And then he adds the following remarkable words: "*If you be without chastisement, whereof all are made partakers, then are you bastards, and not sons.*" (*Heb.* xii. 6, 7, 8).

Third motive: Trials and sufferings afford occasion of practising the most precious virtues, such as resignation and conformity to God's holy will, mortification, and penance, a weaning of the heart from this wretched world, and a raising up of our thoughts and desires to heaven, our true country. "*It is good for me,*" said David, "*that Thou hast humbled me, that I may learn Thy justifications.*" (*Ps.* cxviii. 71). So has it been at all times, God opening the eyes of men by tribulations, who, had they been allowed to go on through life in a career of prosperity, would have remained blind to God, His holy Commandments, and the life to come. O, how many souls are there in heaven on account of afflictions, who should be in hell, if they had not met these afflictions! In effect, is not suffering the way to heaven? Is it not the way our Blessed Saviour has taught us by His own example? He was foretold by the Prophet to be "*a man of sorrows.*" (*Isai.* liii. 3). And after having risen from the dead, when He joined the two disciples on the road, as they were speaking sadly to each other of their Master's sufferings and death, He reproached them, and said: "*Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and so to enter into His glory?*" (*Luke* xxiv. 26). The way which our Blessed Lord made choice of for Himself, He also appointed for His Blessed Mother and Apostles, and all holy souls, so that "The Imitation" says, with great reason: "If there were anything better, or more useful for man's salvation than to suffer, Christ would certainly have pointed it out by word and example, for He exhorts His disciples in following Him, and all who desire to follow Him;" "*If any one wish to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me:*" and then the pious author of "The Imitation" concludes: "Everything, therefore, being read through, and thoroughly examined, the final conclusion must be, that *it is through many tribulations we are to enter the kingdom of God.*" (L. ii. cap. xii.)

5. In public calamities, such as wars, pestilences, and famines, in bad seasons and deficient harvests, in social troubles and

commotions, we are to hold fast to the will of God, and keep our souls in peace, as we remind ourselves of our Father in heaven, Who permits all these things for ends and purposes in accordance with His wisdom, justice, and goodness. Hence we should be ready in all these troubles, to say in our hearts with the Psalmist: *Our God is our refuge and strength. . . . Therefore we will not fear when the earth shall be troubled, and the mountains shall be removed into the heart of the sea.*" (*Ps.* xlv. 2, 3).

6. Nevertheless, both in public and private calamities, we may pray to avert God's anger, and mitigate the severity of His chastisements. So does a child with a parent, whom he has displeased, but whose displeasure he seeks to appease by begging pardon, and asking forgiveness. The Ninevites had recourse to fasting and prayer, and thereby averted the destruction that was to befal them in forty days. In the same way did the prophets stay the arm of the Almighty in the chastisements of His people, by inducing them to have recourse to the Divine clemency by being "*converted to the Lord with all their heart, in fasting, and in weeping, and in mourning.*" (*Joel* ii. 12). In the same way, we are to have recourse to God's paternal goodness in all our afflictions, at the same time that we must hold ourselves in constant submission to His ever blessed will. O, what an example does not our Divine Saviour give us in His Passion! Overcome with a mortal agony in the garden, the night before His Passion, He addressed Himself to His Heavenly Father, saying: "*Father, if it be possible, let this chalice pass away from Me;*" but, He immediately added: "*Nevertheless, not My will but Thine be done.*" He repeated the prayer over and over for three long hours, in such a state of agony, as that His blood burst out through all the pores of His body, still He never repeated it without immediately adding: "*Nevertheless, not My will but Thine be done.*" What a lesson to us, to have recourse to our Heavenly Father in all our afflictions of mind and body; but, at the same time, to leave ourselves in His hands, to have His ever-adorable will accomplished in us, saying to Him, not my will but Thine be done on earth, as it is in heaven.

7. So far we have been considering the absolute will of God, or the will of His good pleasure, and we have seen, that in praying that it be done on earth, as it is in heaven, we beg, that all mankind may submit to it, may be resigned to it, may conform with it, whilst, at the same time, it allows us to pray that He

would stay the execution of its decrees, and even withdraws them altogether in cases of calamity or affliction, private or public, so far as it may be for His own greater glory and our greater good. We now proceed to say something of God's will of precept, and we are to consider, in the first place, what it is.

8. God's will of precept is presented to us in His Commandments, called the Decalogue, or Ten Commandments, including of course, the Precepts of the Church; and our prayer asks that His will may be done on earth in respect of these Commandments. For doing this we stand in need of His holy grace, which is the principal object of our petition. "*Without Me*," says our Blessed Lord, "*you can do nothing*" (*John* xv. 5), and St. Paul confesses, that "*We are not sufficient to think anything of ourselves, as of ourselves: but our sufficiency is from God*" (2 *Cor.* iii. 5). Whilst, on the other hand, he assures us, "*We can do all things in Him that strengtheneth us.*" (*Phil.* iv. 13). Thus, standing in need of God's grace, and relying on its efficacy, we beg of God, by implication, to bestow upon us that grace for the fulfilment of His Commandments, that thereby His will, His preceptive will, may be done on earth.

But the grace of God does not do all. We must also unite our own endeavours by co-operating with grace. Therefore, the petition, "*Thy will be done*," implies the obligation, on our part, of this co-operation in all the ways, and with all the conditions necessary for the proper fulfilment of God's Commandments. Now, these conditions—what are they? They are, chiefly three, as follow: first, exactness; secondly, fervour; and, thirdly, perseverance. As to the condition of exactness, it requires, that we fulfil all the Commandments, without exception, remembering, as the Apostle says: "*Whosoever shall keep the whole law, but offend in one point, is become guilty of all.*" (*James* ii. 10). And this is the teaching, moreover, of our Divine Lord Himself, when He says: "*He that shall break* ONE *of these least commandments, and shall so teach men, shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven.*" (*Matt.* v. 19).

The fervour, with which we should fulfil God's Commandments, comprises promptitude, by which we are always ready to fulfil every commandment, according as its obligation occurs, and with this promptitude a cheerfulness of heart in what we do. "*My heart is ready, O God, my heart is ready,*" says the

Royal Psalmist (*Ps.* lvi. 8); and the Apostle says: "*God loveth a cheerful giver.*" (2 *Cor.* ix. 7). This promptitude and cheerfulness make us, as it were, to run in God's service. Hence the Psalmist says: "*I have run the way of Thy Commandments, when Thou didst enlarge my heart.*" (*Ps.* cxviii. 32). Nay, they give us wings, making us say: "*Who will give me wings like a dove, and I will fly and be at rest?*" (*Ps.* liv. 7).

But our fervour in the observance of God's Commandments must be a persevering fervour. O, yes, this is the crowning condition. Our Saviour is most distinct in telling us so: "*He that shall persevere unto the end,*" says our Blessed Lord, "*he shall be saved.*" (*Matt.* x. 22). O, how should we not pray for this blessed perseverance, which is the sure but necessary condition of our salvation!

Then, in praying that God's will be done, we beg of God, in so far as His blessed will is preceptive, that His holy Commandments be duly and properly fulfilled by mankind here on earth, and we engage, on our own part, to do all that depends upon us to fulfil them all, to fulfil them promptly and cheerfully, and to continue perseveringly in the fulfilment of them unto death.

9. It remains for us to say a few words on God's will of counsel. Beyond His Commandments, which are preceptive and obligatory, God's holy will proposes to us certain things of higher perfection, which would be very pleasing to Him, if we would do them, but He does not bind us to do them. He leaves us to our own good will to do them or not, with the understanding that, if we do them, we will give Him much pleasure, and earn for ourselves a hundred-fold reward in this world, and life everlasting in the world to come. O, let us listen to our Blessed Saviour's words: "*Every one that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands for My name's sake, shall receive an hundred fold, and shall possess life everlasting.*" (*Matt.* xix. 29). These are the words which peopled the deserts with holy hermits and monks, "*of whom,*" as St. Paul says, "*the world was not worthy,*" so perfect were their lives; and it is these same words, maintaining all their force and freshness to the present day, that take away so many good and holy souls of either sex from kindred, from parents and home, from the pleasures and prospects of life, and lead them to God, to consecrate their entire

being to His holy service, in the observance of poverty, chastity, and obedience, for their whole life here on earth. Holy souls! happy souls! Borne onward by Divine love, as the "Imitation of Christ" says of them: "They fly, they run, they rejoice, they are free, being bound by no earthly tie; they give all for all, and possess all in all, because they repose in the Supreme Good, from which all that is good proceeds. O, if any one truly love God, he knows the meaning and effect of this heavenly love. What a cry in the ears of God is the ardent affection of a soul saying from within her interior, 'O my God, O my love, O Thou art all mine, and I am entirely thine.'" (*B.* iii. chap. v.)

10. We have only to say a word or two on the manner in which we are to pray, that God's will be done here on earth. It is, as our Saviour tells us, in the same manner as it is done in heaven. Yes, we are to imitate the angels in heaven in the promptitude and cheerfulness, with which they are always ready to receive the orders of their Great King. The Prophet Daniel describes them, "*in their thousands of thousands ministering to Him, and ten thousand times a hundred thousand standing before Him,*" awaiting His orders and commands. (*Dan.* vii. 10). And the same scene was displayed to St. John, as he tells us in the Apocalypse (v. 11). O, what an example! and how happy should we not be to imitate it here on earth, that we may be associated with them in doing the will of God in heaven.

Conclusion.

Resume the several points briefly, but clearly, and **finish** with some words of exhortation in conformity with the subject.

Consult Catechism of the Council of Trent (*de Orat. Dom.*)

THE LORD'S PRAYER.

FOURTH PETITION.

"*Give us this day our daily bread.*"

Introduction.

The Lord's Prayer consists of two parts, and, as we recite it in common, the Priest or other person presiding recites the first part, and the others recite the second. The first relates chiefly to our Heavenly Father, and the interests of His glory in heaven, as also His supreme government of the universe, of which He is the Sovereign Lord and Master; but, indirectly, it relates also to our position here on earth, as pilgrims and passengers on our way to our true country in the other world. The second part, on the contrary, relates directly and mainly to our wants and necessities here below, on account of which we have recourse to God with filial confidence, as children to the best of Fathers. Having, therefore, treated of the three petitions comprised in the first part of the prayer, we now proceed, in God's name, to the fourth petition, which is the first of the second part, and is announced in the words, "*Give us this day our daily bread.*"

[A few words to bespeak attention, and invoke a blessing.]

Body of the Subject.

1. In our explanation of this petition we are to consider, in the first place, its object, which is "*our daily bread.*" Bread, according to the use the Scripture makes of the word, has a wide signification, and comprises all the necessaries of life. Now, we have a twofold life, the life of the body and the life of the soul; therefore, when we say "*Give us this day our daily bread,*" we ask for all that we stand in need of for the one and the other.

With regard to our bodily life, we stand in need of food, clothing, and some sort of a residence to abide in. Whence are these things to be supplied to us? Evidently from the storehouse of God's fatherly providence. He is the universal Father of mankind, and we are all His children, and, therefore, as a

father here on earth provides the daily food on which his children live, so does God supply to the whole human race their daily subsistence. "*The eyes of all hope in Thee, O Lord,*" says the Psalmist, "*and Thou givest them meat in due season. Thou openest Thy hand and fillest with blessing every living creature.*" (*Ps.* cxliv. 15, 16).

In the desert, where there was no food to be had, He sent down a daily supply from heaven in the form of Manna, to feed the thousands upon thousands of His people, and continued this mode of feeding them for forty years, as they were journeying on to the promised land. Our Divine Lord, likewise, would not allow the thousands who flocked to hear His heavenly preaching go away hungry; and, on one occasion, He afforded a copious repast to five thousand people, from five loaves and two fishes, and, on another occasion, He fed four thousand men, without counting women and children, with seven loaves and a few little fishes. We are surprised at these miracles, because they were so singular, but what we see in the ordinary course of God's providence ought to surprise us still more, feeding, as He does, the whole human family, not once, or twice, or for forty years together, but every day, year after year, from generation to generation, without interruption of a single day. In effect, this whole world, is it not a vast storehouse for our daily food, for the wants of this temporal life? "*The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof,*" says the Psalmist (*Ps.* xxiii. 1); and has He not handed over, as it were, to man the earth with all its fulness, to rule over it as its sovereign, subject only to the great Lord and Master Himself? Is not this His own specific declaration? (Quote *Ps.* viii. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10). How wonderful to think, that the morsel of bread we hold in our hand to put into our mouth, comes to us from the hand of God's providence! He gave the seed in the beginning of the world, and since then there has been sowing and reaping, year after year, God Almighty keeping us in view all along to provide us with the food we use at every single meal, through all the vicissitudes and changes the world has undergone in the succession of ages. Thus is it, that His fatherly providence is from generation to generation, "*reaching,*" as the Wise Man describes it, "*from end to end mightily, and ordering all things sweetly.*" (*Wisd.* viii. 1). O that, with the Apostle, "*we would bow our knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and that*

Christ would dwell by faith in our hearts; that we would be able to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth, and length, and height, and depth of the charity of Christ, which surpasseth all knowledge unto the fulness of God." (*Ephes.* iii. 14, 17, 18, 19).

But, why does the petition we are considering say not merely give us our bread, but "*Give us this day our daily bread?*" There are several reasons. In the first place, we can understand it very well with regard to the poor. They live on from day to day, and, not unfrequently, do not know in the morning where they are to find the means to take them through the day. They have reason to call upon their Father in heaven every day for their daily bread. They do so, and their Father hears them from the height of heaven, and feeds them, as He feeds the fowls of the air. Yes, this is what our Saviour says: "*Behold the birds of the air, they neither sow, nor do they reap, nor gather into barns, and your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are not you of much more value than they?*" (*Matt.* vi. 26). Here, indeed, amongst the poor, these favourites of heaven, whom our dear Saviour calls blessed, and says they have a special right to the kingdom of heaven—here let me say, amongst God's poor, we see the visible and immediate action of God's providence. Ask them how are they to live next year, next month, next week, next day. They have no answer to give, but that God is good, and He will provide for them in the future, as He has provided for them in the past, and that their trust is in His heavenly providence. And are they disappointed? We see them living on from day to day, from week to week, from year to year, and they live as long, in the average, as their richer neighbours; and they get as good, aye, and better health, and their simple, humble fare agrees with them better, than the more sumptuous eating and drinking of those above them. They sleep better too at night, and get up fresher in the morning to begin a new day. And look at their children, fresh and blooming, children that you would look for their equals in vain in the nurseries or drawing-rooms of the rich. Verily, verily, the poor exhibit to us the daily operation of the petition, "*Give us this day our daily bread*," in their dependence on God's providence, and the bounty of God's providence in their regard.

We see another reason for the words "*Give us this day*," and "*daily*," in connection with the bread we are to ask of God. It

is that we would always keep in mind the maxim of Divine Wisdom, "*Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof;*" that we should not be over anxious about our temporal concerns; that we should not, like the pagans, be tormenting ourselves by asking: "*What we shall eat, or what we shall drink, or wherewith we shall be clothed,*" but that in all confidence we would say to ourselves: "*Our Father, who is in heaven, knoweth we have need of all these things,*" and that "*if we seek first the kingdom of God and His justice,*" we have God's holy promise, that "*all these things will be added unto us.*" (*Matt.* vi.)

With regard to the rich and wealthy classes, the words "*this day,*" and "*daily,*" have also their meaning. Are not they too living on from day to day? Does not God preserve their substance for them, from day to day? and no matter how choice their eating and drinking may be, what good will it do them, unless they have health to relish and digest it; and do not they depend, from day to day, upon God for their health? And if they have soft couches to lay upon, how many a sleepless night, or several hours of the night, have they from various causes; whilst the poor workman is scarcely in bed, on his pallet of straw, when he falls asleep, and does not awaken till morning? Thus do we see, that all classes have need of asking God for bread, and for their daily bread, every day, that is, for the supply of all the wants and necessities of our temporal or corporal state in this world.

2. We have the same need as regards our souls and our spiritual welfare. The bread, or food of our souls, is chiefly threefold, namely, Prayer, the Word of God, and the Sacraments. As to Prayer, "it ascends, and the mercy of God descends," as St. Augustine says. "*The Lord giveth to the young ravens that call upon Him,*" says the Psalmist (*Ps.* cxlvi. 9). What an illustration! The unfledged raven opens its mouth, and sends forth its hoarse cry of hunger, and God feeds it, by the care of its parent. Applying the illustration, our Saviour would say to us: "*are not you of much more value than they*"—than the ravens of the air? (*Matt.* vi. 26). And if God so liberally supplies them with the food they require for the life He has given them, when they cry to Him, how much more willingly will He hear our voice, when saying to Him, "*Give us this day our daily bread,*" asking Him for the food of our souls, according to the daily want we have of this celestial nutriment.

In the second place, we find food for our souls in the Word of God. Our Divine Lord in His reply to the tempter said: "*Man liveth not by bread alone, but by every Word of God.*" (*Luke* iv. 4). This spiritual food is supplied to us by the preaching of God's Word, by spiritual reading, by the advice and instruction of parents and superiors, and the voice of God speaking silently, but most effectively, within our consciences. We stand in need of this spiritual food from day to day, and, therefore, we pray for it every day, saying: "*Give us this day our daily bread.*"

In the third place, we find a most precious food for our souls in the Sacraments. These Holy Institutions were established to respond to the various necessities of our souls, in the same way as the Almighty has provided for the necessities of our bodies. But there are two which are designed especially for our frequent use, namely, the Sacrament of Penance and the Blessed Eucharist. In warfare, there are two services particularly looked after as essential to the army; one, the commissariat service, to provide food for the soldiers in due time, every day, and the second, the medical service, to provide medicine and medical aid, according as it may be necessary. So is it with us in our warfare with our three mortal enemies, the devil, the world, and our own corrupt nature. Now, the Blessed Eucharist is afforded us as a spiritual food for our encounters with these ceaseless foes, and Penance is a medicine not only to cure our wounds, but even to restore us to life, should we receive a mortal thrust in the combats we have to sustain. We cannot, all of us, receive these Sacraments every day, but they are received, every day, by many of our brethren in various places throughout the world, and as we pray not for ourselves alone, but for our brethren everywhere, we ask, on their behalf and our own conjointly, that God would "*give us this day our daily bread*," in the Sacraments of the Blessed Eucharist and Penance.

3. It remains only to explain why in the Petition we say "*us*" and "*our*," rather than "*me*" and "*my*." We have in part anticipated the reason. We are all members and brethren of the great family of the human race, as we recite the Lord's Prayer, and we address ourselves to Almighty God, as our common Father. What a spectacle in the face of high heaven: millions of human beings in all parts of the world, east, west, north, and south, sending forth their joint petitions to Almighty

God, as the children of an ordinary family would unite in a combined petition to their father, for favours they would ask of him for each other.

But we are to remember, that, if we pray as members and brethren of the same family, mutually interested for each other, we are bound to act towards each other in this spirit. It would appear very unnatural for a member of a family to keep to himself, and for himself alone, the bread which his father would give him to distribute amongst his brothers and sisters. In the same way it is unnatural, that those to whom God has entrusted the good things of this world in abundance, would keep an abundance to themselves, and not share it with their fellow-creatures, according to the order they have from Him, as He says to us all: "*Deal thy bread to the hungry, and bring the needy and harbourless into thy house. When thou shalt see one naked, cover him, and despise not thy own flesh.*" (*Isai.* lviii. 7). Alas! how we forget, that what is superfluous in our hands is not ours. It belongs to the poor. We are only trustees, on the part of God, to distribute amongst our humbler brethren what we have ourselves no want of, and by refusing to do so, we derange, and frustrate God's bountiful providence, who desires that those who are in need of their daily bread, should be supplied with it from what we have over and above our own wants. "The bread which you keep back," says St. Ambrose, "belongs to the poor. The clothing that you lock up, belongs to the naked; and the money that you put by in store should be for the relief and succour of the miserable." (*Serm.* 81). How preposterous is it therefore, is it not a mockery of God, to include our neighbour as a brother in our prayer, asking our common Father in heaven to grant this poor brother his daily bread, whilst we keep fast hold of that bread, and refuse to reach it to him, notwithstanding that it is for this purpose it was entrusted to us?

Conclusion.

Sum up briefly the several points, and end with some words of exhortation in conformity with them.

Consult Catechism of the Council of Trent (*de Orat. Dom.*)

THE LORD'S PRAYER.

FIFTH PETITION.

"*Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them who trespass against us.*"

Introduction.

These words contain the fifth Petition of the Lord's Prayer, and they present to us an object very different from the objects of the foregoing Petitions. In the foregoing petitions we ask of God not only spiritual and eternal blessings, but also the perishable favours belonging to this miserable life. In this petition, however, and the two others that follow, we pray against the evils, to which we are exposed in soul and body for this life, and the life to come. We say to our good and merciful Father in heaven, "*Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them who trespass against us.*" How important this petition! When we look beyond this life, what have we to fear on entering the house of eternity? We have only our trespasses, that is, our sins, to be afraid of. It is on account of sin, that death, judgment, hell, and eternity, cause us such alarm and terror, when we think of them. If our sins be pardoned us, we can look forward to our entrance into the world to come with joy, and say with the Apostle: "*We know, if our earthly house of this habitation be dissolved, that we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in heaven.*" (2 *Cor.* v. 1).

[A few words to invite attention, with a short invocation.]

Body of the Subject.

1. "*Forgive us our trespasses.*" These words tell us the object of the Petition, or what we pray for; namely, that our merciful Father would pardon us the offences we have committed, and every day commit, against His Divine Majesty. Alas! how numerous and various are these offences! Offences against God, against our neighbour, and against ourselves; offences of thought, word, deed, and omission; offences in childhood, in youth, and riper years; offences on every occasion and temptation that come in our way, and offences that con-

tinued habitually and persistently for years and years; offences in ourselves and by ourselves alone; and offences in others, and with others, by participation or co-operation in their guilt: offences mortal, and offences venial; offences public, and offences private; offences against the Commandments of God, and the Precepts of His Holy Church. Which of these Commandments, which of these Precepts have we not violated, doing what they forbid, and not doing what they order? Which of the seven deadly sins have we not been guilty of, and guilty times and times innumerable? O! what reason have we not to hang down our heads, and strike our breasts, as we repeat the words, "*Forgive us our trespasses.*" With such a multitude, and such a variety of offences staring us in the face, have we not reason to lament with the Psalmist, and say: "*Our iniquities have overtaken us . . . They are multiplied above the hairs of our heads. . . . Be pleased, O Lord, to deliver us, look down, O Lord, to help us.*" (*Ps.* xxxix. 13, 14).

2. But, will you say, that you have repented of your sins, that you have confessed them, and that you have obtained pardon of them in the Sacrament of Penance? Ah! take care. Let not the devil prevail against you by presumption. Remember the words of Solomon: "*There are just men and wise men, and their works are in the hand of God, and yet man knoweth not whether he be worthy of love or hatred.*" (*Eccles.* ix. 1). Terrible words! words that have made the greatest saints tremble. Yes, you have repented; but was your repentance adequate to your guilt? You have been to confession; but did you bring the required dispositions to the holy tribunal? Alas! who can answer these questions? Here then is our state. We know we have sinned, and we know not if we have been pardoned. We hope we have; we hope, and this hope should keep us from falling into dejection or despair. But an absolute certainty we cannot have, unless by special revelation, which we have not, and, therefore, we must live on, and enter into eternity not knowing if, as we meet the Judge on the threshold, we shall be found worthy of love or hatred. Therefore it is that the Apostle exhorts us "*to work out our salvation in fear and trembling.*" (*Phil.* ii. 12). It is, therefore, in this humble state of mind, between hope and fear, that we should address ourselves to our Heavenly Father, when we say to Him, "*Forgive us our trespasses.*"

3. But even though we were assured by special revelation that our sins were forgiven us in the Sacrament of Penance, have we not still reason to call upon God, and pray He would forgive us our trespasses? Most assuredly we have. Do we not know that, whilst sin is remitted as to its guilt, and the eternal punishment it deserved, there still remains, in most cases, a temporal punishment to be undergone either in this world, or in Purgatory? On this account, the Holy Ghost exhorts us in the Sacred Scriptures, saying: "*Be not without fear for sin forgiven.*" (*Eccli.* v. 5). David was assured by the Prophet that his sin was forgiven. Nevertheless, he always kept up the bitter memory of it, so as to have it as an object staring him in the face; "*I know my iniquity*," he used to say to God, "*I know my iniquity, and my sin is always before me.*" (*Ps.* l. 5). And thus, having his sins always before his mind, did this penitent king, "*eat ashes as bread, and mingled his drink with his weeping.*" In the bitterness of his sorrow, he wept the night long, watering his couch with tears. He forgot frequently his daily bread, so that "*his very bones became dry like fuel for the fire, cleaving to his flesh through the voice of his groaning.*" (*Ps.* ci. 4, 6). What an example, though he was assured that his sin was forgiven him! And Magdalen, the penitent Magdalen,—her sins were forgiven her, because she heard the assuring and consoling words of our Divine Redeemer saying to her in express terms, "*Thy sins are forgiven thee.*" (*Luke* vii. 48). Yet she kept a bitter memory of her sins in her heart of love; and, as she always thought of them, her tears never ceased to flow, so that literally her tears became "*her bread night and day*" (*Ps.* xli. 4) as long as she lived after. O, with what effusion did she not pour out her heart, when she said, "*forgive us our trespasses?*" Oh, that we could recite the Petition with the same sorrow for our past transgressions, even though we confessed them, and obtained pardon of them!

And Peter! O Peter, thy Lord and Master looked upon thee with eyes of mercy, and that look "*gave water to thy head, and a fountain of tears to thy eyes*" (*Jer.* ix. 1); so that, whenever afterwards the cock crew, thy tears gushed forth afresh till thy very cheeks became furrowed by the constant flowing of thy penitential tears. O, with what an overflowing heart did he not say, "*Forgive us our trespasses!*" So it is, according to the example of all true penitents, we must never lose sight of our

sins, though even we were assured of having been pardoned, because, in most cases, the temporal debt still remains due to God's justice, and we should never cease to implore His forgiveness, adding penitential works to our prayers.

4. But, in addition to our past sins, the sins of former years, have we not those of every day's commission to deplore, and ask pardon of, when we say, "*Forgive us our trespasses?*" Alas! is it not a fact that "*in many things we all offend*," a fact testified by the evidence of God Himself? (*James* iii. 2.) Alas! does not the Holy Ghost, by the pen of St. John, declare, that if we say, that we have no sin, "*We deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us?*" (1 *John* i. 8). What day passes over our head, and brings us to evening, that we do not find, as we examine our conscience, that we have in various ways offended God, either mortally, or at least venially? Have we not reason, therefore, to cry out every day to the God of mercy, "*Forgive us our trespasses*," in a spirit of humility and penance?

Even our good works, on which we so much rely, which of them is without fault? Our prayers, are they not often turned into sin, as the Psalmist says? (*Ps.* cviii. 7). Yes, our good works are like filthy rags. The comparison is that of the Holy Ghost Himself—like filthy rags (*Isai.* lxiv. 6. Look at a rag, steeped in the filth of the street, or in a dung-hill; it becomes filthy by the filth of the street, or the filth of the dung-hill. So, likewise, our good actions, partaking of the filth of our corrupt nature, though good in themselves, become filthy in the sight of God; and, if it were not for His infinite goodness, and the infinite merits of our Redeemer, they should be disgusting in His eyes. We have, therefore, much to deplore all that is imperfect even in our good actions; and, therefore, we should have constant recourse to the Divine clemency, saying: "*Forgive us our trespasses.*"

5. But we should remember all along in the Lord's Prayer, that we do not pray for ourselves individually and alone, but we pray likewise for our brethren, as members of the same family, under God as our common Father. Therefore, even though we could flatter ourselves that we are personally without sin, we must recollect that "*the whole world is seated in wickedness*," as St. John declares (1 *John* v. 19); that now, as well as in the time of our Divine Lord's preaching, "*wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there are who*

enter thereat." (*Matt.* vii. 13). We are to include these poor souls in our petition, beseeching our Heavenly Father to grant them the grace to be converted from the error of their way, that they may "*enter the narrow gate,*" and journey on by "*the strait way that leadeth to life.*" (*Matt.* vii. 14).

We also include in the Petition, "*forgive us our trespasses,*" heretics and schismatics, begging of God to bring them back to the one true Fold, under the one true Shepherd.

We even take account of the Jews, praying that "*God would take away the veil from their hearts*" (2 *Cor.* iii. 16); that even they may submit themselves to the sweet yoke of Jesus Christ.

In fine, we pray for the pagan world, for those who still remain "*seated in darkness and the shadow of death,*" that, abandoning their idolatry, they may be converted to the true and living God, and His only Son, Jesus Christ, our Divine Lord and Master.

We therefore see what should be the extent of our charity, as we recite the words, "*Forgive us our trespasses.*" The Petition embraces all mankind, without distinction of race or religion, in the fulness of the charity of God Himself, "*who will have all men to be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth.*" (1 *Tim.* ii. 4).

6. But our Divine Lord annexes a condition to this Petition, for He not only says: "*Forgive us our trespasses,*" but immediately adds: "*As we forgive them who trespass against us.*" And this condition is so important that He makes it a special matter of commentary on the Petition, whereas He adds nothing to the other petitions. He says: *For if you will forgive men their offences, your Heavenly Father will forgive you also your offences. But if you will not forgive men, neither will your Father forgive you your offences.*" (*Matt.* vi. 14, 15.) **Quote** also *Matt.* v. 23, and **Comment** thereon. Likewise, *Matt.* xviii. 22; *Matt.* v. 44, 45. **Infer**, that we pray against ourselves in reciting the Petition: "*Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them who trespass against us,*" unless we forgive others whatever they may have done against us; for, we say by implication: "Since, O Almighty Father, we refuse forgiving others the offences they have committed against us, do Thou refuse forgiving the offences we have committed against Thee." How dreadful to think of such impiety and yet they are guilty of it, and thereby turn

the Lord's Prayer into a curse against themselves, who refuse pardoning their neighbour whatever insult, offence, or injury they may have received at his hands.

The words, "*As we forgive them who trespass against us*," have also another meaning, a meaning of similarity, so as to signify, if we be prompt and generous in forgiving others, we ask God to be prompt and generous in forgiving us: but, on the contrary, if we be slow and difficult in forgiving others, our petition would ask God to be slow and difficult in forgiving us. Alas! why should we be slow and difficult in forgiving our neighbour, when we consider that his offence against us is nothing compared with the magnitude of our offence against God, on account of His Divine Majesty, and our immense lowliness in His sight, which makes sin in a certain sense an evil of infinite malice. (*Matt.* xviii. 25, &c.) (Tell the fact of St. Nicephorus and Sapricius: "Butler's Lives of the Saints," 9th February.)

7. It only remains to see what are the grounds on which we rely, when we hope for forgiveness of our offences, as we say: "*Forgive us our trespasses.*" It should be enough to consider, that our Divine Lord did not mean these words to be empty sounds, going forth from our lips. He surely meant they should have their effect, and, therefore, as our petition goes up, God's mercy comes down, bringing us pardon of our sins, or, at least, the grace of repenting of them, and having recourse to the Sacrament of Penance for their remission. God is always ready to pardon us when we turn to him with a contrite and humble heart, because we have the assurance from Himself that "*a contrite and humble heart He will not despise.*" (*Ps.* l. 19). (Quote *Isai.* lv. 7; *Joel* ii. 12, 13; *Ezec.* xxxiii. 11; *Isai.* i. 18). The preaching of our Divine Lord, and His merciful conduct towards sinners, proclaim—do they not?—that He is even more ready to forgive than we to ask forgiveness. Refer to the parables of the prodigal, of the lost sheep, of the woman having ten groats (*Luke* xv.); also the pardon of Magdalen, of Peter, of the penitent thief, His prayer on the cross for His executioners, &c.

We can therefore have no doubt of the efficacy of our petition, "*Forgive us our trespasses*," as we recite the Lord's Prayer. Our words are, moreover, backed by the mediatorship of our Divine Saviour, to give effect to them. So St. John assures us

(1 *John* ii. 12). How encouraging, how heart-cheering to think that, as we send forth the petition asking forgiveness of our sins, our Blessed Lord presents it to His Eternal Father, and pleads, at the same time, in our behalf, exhibiting His Passion and Death as meriting for us the pardon we ask.

Conclusion.

Recapitulate the points briefly, adding some words of exhortation in accordance with them.

Consult Catechism of the Council of Trent (*de Orat. Dom.*)

THE LORD'S PRAYER.

SIXTH PETITION.

"*Lead us not into temptation.*"

Introduction.

These words announce to us the sixth Petition of the Lord's Prayer. Our entire business in this world, in order to gain heaven in the next, consists in two things, to avoid evil and do good. The evil we are to avoid is the evil of sin, which is an essential evil, and the only real evil in the world. Now it is temptation that leads to sin, or it is sin itself when we yield to it, and enter into it, in the sense of the Petition we are going to treat of. We, therefore, see the importance of the subject at a glance, and how much it deserves our best attention, &c.

[A short invocation.]

Body of the Subject.

1. "*Lead us not into temptation.*" Temptation means trial, and it may lead in two directions, either in the direction of virtue or in the direction of sin. In the former case it comes from God; in the latter it comes from the devil.

We will first consider it as coming from God. It is His blessed will to tempt, or try us, from time to time, in order to afford us thereby occasions of practising virtue, earning merit, and laying up reward for the world to come (quote *Tobias* xii. 13; *Eccli.* xxvii. 6, ii. 1; *James* i. 12). Therefore, the Psalmist prayed (xxv. 2). Add examples, such as Job, Tobias, Apostles, Martyrs, Confessors, and the Saints in every age. (Quote *Heb.* xi. 36, &c.)

Advantages of temptations of this sort. 1st, Opportunities of fighting the fight of salvation, for St. Paul tells us, that it is he only, who strives lawfully, that is crowned (2 *Tim.* ii. 5); and he, therefore, exhorts his beloved disciple, Timothy, "*to fight the good fight of Faith*" (1 *Tim.* vi. 12); and of himself he says: "*I have fought the good fight*," *&c.* (2 *Tim.* iv. 7). 2ndly, They teach us our own weakness, and the necessity we are under of having constant recourse to God. 3rdly, Virtue is strengthened, and strikes root more deeply in the soul by means of them. (Quote *Ps.* lxv. 10; *Zach.* xiii. 9; *Isaï.* i. 25). 4thly, They render us more careful and vigilant. (Quote 1 *Pet.* v. 8). 5thly, They serve to instruct ourselves, and thereby to instruct others, by the experience they afford us.

On account of these, and other reasons, the saints and servants of God, so far from being sad or afflicted, when tried with the temptations that befall them in the order of God's providence, rejoice, and thank His infinite goodness, according to the exhortation of the Apostle St. James (i. 2), which quote.

These temptations coming in this way from God are ordinarily sickness, temporal losses, poverty, loss of friends, calumny, persecution, &c. Observe, we must make a distinction in the trials we have to suffer from others, between God and His holy designs in our regard, on one side, and the intentions and acts of our fellow-beings on the other. God permits what they do against us, as He bears with what they do against Himself by committing sin, but, as regards us, He has always in view our greater good, because those trials and temptations are the way to heaven, the way our Blessed Lord has shown us by His own example, and the way by which He conducted His blessed Mother, and all His saints. (Quote *Luke* xxiv. 26; 2 *Tim.* ii. 12; *Acts* xiv. 21). Some words of exhortation to bear all temptations of this sort with patience, resignation, thanksgiving, confidence, joy, &c. (*Rom.* v. 3; 2 *Cor.* iv. 17.)

2. *Temptations from the devil.* It is by temptations he seeks to overcome us. St. James says (i. 14, 15); he gets hold of us by our corrupt nature, and so leads us on, step by step, into sin. He first puts the sinful deed before our minds by suggestion, and we look at it with the thought of our mind, as Eve looked at the forbidden fruit with the eyes of her body. 2ndly, He keeps the evil thing before our mind, that we may continue to think on it, and take pleasure in doing so, as Eve was tempted to continue looking at the apple, taking pleasure in the appearance of it. "*It was pair to her eyes, and delightful to behold.*" (*Gen.* iii. 6.) In the third place, he seeks to obtain our consent that we may commit the evil deed like Eve, who, led on by these steps, consented in the end, reached forth her hand, plucked the fruit, ate it, and gave it likewise to her husband to eat. This is what the devil is endeavouring to do with us, every day of our lives, so that in resisting him we have to maintain a life-long warfare with him. On this account, holy Job tells us, "*man's life is a warfare on earth.*" (*Job* vii. 1). And when we speak of the devil, we speak of him not as a single-handed enemy, but as an enemy who has at his command a countless army of evil spirits. (Quote *Mark* v. 9, relating the example.) Poor Magdalen was possessed of seven devils. Quote also *Matt.* xii. 45, with the whole passage, and go on to say, that a large, a countless number of the rebel angels, who in their fall were immediately turned into devils, roam about through this world, carrying their hell of suffering with them wherever they go, and that their business is to keep up a continual war against the servants of God. Quote *Ephes.* vi. 12, and enlarge thereon, to bring out the idea of an army regularly disciplined, and implacable in its hostility, marshalled against us for our eternal ruin.

What resistance can we offer in this warfare against these legions of evil spirits? Alas! of ourselves, we are no match for them. As far as we are concerned, it is a contest between weakness the most weak, and power the most powerful, backed by endless resources. All the men in the world hand to hand with even one of these evil spirits, would be as unequal for the contest as an infant child against the greatest giant. Though fallen, they retain their nature, which, as being a spiritual nature, is immeasurably superior to ours. Thus do we see an angel destroying, in one night, a hundred and eighty-five thou-

sand of the Assyrians (*Isai.* xxxvii. 36); and the fallen angels retain the same power to use it against God's servants, so far as God allows them. Thus, when He allowed Satan to afflict holy Job, he brought in upon his property a band of robbers who rushed upon his servants and killed them, and brought off his oxen and his asses. He next brought lightning down from the clouds, that killed on the spot the holy man's sheep, and the servants in care of them. In another direction, the evil spirit brought in three hostile troops amongst his camels, who took them away, putting the servants to the sword. But worse, still, he stirred up a storm, and made it beat against the house, where Job's children, his seven sons and three daughters, were enjoying themselves in all the happiness of family society, and it blew with such violence, as to strike the house down, covering in its ruins the whole family. What a series of calamities, one after another, and all in one night! But yesterday, Job had seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, five hundred yoke of oxen, and five hundred she-asses, and a number of servants exceeding great, so as to be beyond counting, and he himself, as the Sacred Text tells us, was respected and honoured by all the people of the East. Such was Job yesterday, and to-day he has not a single four-footed animal, and all his servants are slain, save only the individual, who came to him, in each instance, to tell him the calamity that had occurred. But yesterday, Job was the respected and loving father of seven sons and three daughters, all in the flower of their age, and in blooming health, for each of whom he every morning offered sacrifice to the Lord to preserve them from sin, and bring down God's blessing upon them, but to-day, alas! he is alone, in a lonely house, without son or daughter. But all is not come to an end. The devil would have killed the holy man himself if God permitted him. But he was told he must spare the holy man's life. Accordingly, short of killing him, he did everything else on his person, striking him with a hideous leprosy that covered his whole body from head to foot, eating away his flesh, so as to reach his very vitals, and the marrow of his bones. What a spectacle does he present, as he sits in silence on his dung-hill, scraping away in sorrow and in pain the corrupt matter with a potsherd from his sores, and, in this state, lifting up his thoughts to God, and saying, in all patience and resignation: "*If we have received good things at the*

hands of God, why should we not receive evil." (*Job* ii. 10). Behold the power and malice of the devil! We have now some idea of the warfare in which we are engaged, and of the enemies with whom we have to fight the battle of salvation. What can we do in so unequal a conflict against opponents so much superior to us in strength? What can we do? We can do just nothing, and, at the same time, we can do all things. Without God's assistance we can do nothing, absolutely nothing; for our Divine Lord tells us most explicitly: "*Without Me you can do nothing*" (*John* xv. 5); and, on the other side, St. Paul is equally explicit in saying: "*We can do all things in Him who strengtheneth us.*" (*Phil.* iv. 13). We are, therefore, in the hands of God. We fight under the shield of His Divine protection, and so far as we do battle under His standard, we are sure of victory. **Quote** *Ps.* xc. to show, 1st, how we are under the immediate protection of God Himself; and 2ndly, how also He has given us in charge of His angels. **Quote** also, 1 *Cor.* x. 13, to show how, with the assistance God affords us in our strife with the enemy of our salvation, we may turn all temptations to our advantage.

3. But we are to bear in mind, that, besides our spiritual enemies, we have to fight against enemies of quite another kind, the world with its perverse examples, its attractive vanities, and deceitful maxims, and also our own corrupt nature; and from these two sources come temptations, against which we pray when we say, "*lead us not into temptation.*"

With regard to the world, we must always remember the woe our Divine Lord pronounces upon it, when He says, "*Woe to the world because of scandals*" (*Matt.* xviii. 7); that is on account of the bad examples by which it leads mankind into temptation. And again, St. John asserts that "*the whole world is seated in wickedness*" (1 *John* v. 19); and that "*all that is in the world is the concupiscence of the flesh, the concupiscence of the eyes, and the pride of life.*" (*Ibid.* ii. 16). Alas! this vain and wicked world has the greater part of mankind travelling on in the broad way that leadeth to destruction. What reason have we not therefore to pray that it will not seduce us from the narrow path that leadeth to life!

As to our corrupt nature, St. Paul tells us, it places us between life and death, and life and death eternal. "*If,*" says the

Apostle, "*you live according to the flesh, you shall die; but if by the spirit you mortify the deeds of the flesh, you shall live.*" (*Rom.* viii. 13). What a powerful ally has not the devil in our corrupt nature, and an ally all the more to be feared, because it is a part of our very being, and therefore more than a domestic enemy. What need have we not, therefore, to pray against the temptations coming from such an enemy!

4. After having considered what temptation means, its different kinds, and the sources from which it comes, it will be useful for us to reflect a little upon it in connection with the words, "*lead us not into*" it, that is *into* temptation. Our Divine Lord used the same mode of speaking, when in the Garden of Olives He exhorted His disciples "*to watch and pray, that they should not enter into temptation.*" (*Matt.* xxvi. 41). What then! does God lead us *into* temptation? St. James says the contrary, "*Let no man,*" says the Apostle, "*when he is tempted, say that he is tempted by God. For God is not a tempter of evils, and He tempteth no man.*" (*James* i. 13). Then, if God does not tempt us, what is the meaning of praying, that He will lead us not into temptation? This requires explanation, and all the more because, as we have already seen, to be led *into* temptation, or to enter into temptation, is to consent to the temptation, and thereby be guilty of the sin to which the temptation leads or attracts. Assuredly, God cannot lead *into* temptation in this sense, for then, He would be the author, or cause of sin, which would be blasphemy to assert. How then do we ask God not to lead us *into* temptation, or what do we mean by such a petition? To answer the question, we are to take account of a mode of expression not very unusual in the Scripture. It is to say, that God does a thing, when He only permits it to take place or does it permissively. Thus He said to Moses, "*I will harden the heart of Pharaoh:*" that means I will leave Pharaoh to the wickedness of his own heart, whereupon it will become hardened. Again, he says to the Prophet Isaias: "*Blind the heart of this people, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes: lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and be converted and I heal them.*" (*Isai.* vi. 10). How is all this to be done? Is the prophet to blind the people by a positive act? Is he to render them deaf by a positive act? By no means. What then he was to do was to withhold his preaching, and God was to withhold His graces,

whereby a stubborn and stiff-necked people, abandoned to their own depravity, would become blind and deaf, and without understanding in what regarded their own spiritual welfare, and their conversion from the error of their way. We now are enabled to understand the words: "*lead us not into temptation.*" God does not lead any one *into* temptation, that is, into sin, by a positive or direct act of His Divine will, but He permits persons evilly inclined to enter into temptation, or commit sin, by keeping back from them the graces that would save them from sin under the circumstances. Consequently, our petition, when we say, "*lead us not into temptation,*" means do not withhold from us the graces we stand in need of to resist temptation, and to keep us from entering into it, by consenting to it, and being thereby guilty of sin.

Understanding the petition in this sense, we see its importance, and how we should constantly repeat it. We are assailed with temptations from within and without, from the devil, the world, and our own corrupt passions; we are assailed every day, and often every hour of the day, and in every manner, and this is to continue till our last breath; and it is only by God's grace that we can keep ourselves from entering into, and being overcome by, these temptations. What need have we not, therefore, to be unceasing in begging of God that He would not lead us into temptation in the sense of our Divine Lord, as we have explained; and what thanks do we not owe Him for putting into our mouths a petition so vitally connected with our salvation?

Conclusion.

Recapitulate the points briefly, and end with some words of exhortation in accordance with them.

Consult Catechism of Council of Trent (*Orat. Dom.*), and Imitation of Christ (Book 1, chap. xiii.).

THE LORD'S PRAYER.

SEVENTH PETITION.

"*Deliver us from evil. Amen.*"

Introduction.

We are come to the seventh and last Petition of the Lord's Prayer. It is expressed in the words I have just quoted, which are so familiar to us all, and which we so constantly repeat. Like the other Petitions, it is very comprehensive, and admits of large development and diffuse explanation. We shall, therefore, enter at once on the consideration of it, and pursue the various details we shall find it to comprise.

[Some words to engage attention, after which a short invocation.]

Body of the Subject.

1. "*Deliver us from evil. Amen.*" Evil is the opposite of good, and as we desire that which is good, or seems to us good, so we endeavour to escape that which is evil, or at least appears to us to be evil. But, setting aside the appearances of things, we are encompassed on all sides with evils, and real positive evils. The infant just born sends forth its wail instinctively, as it enters into this world, as if feeling at once that it has a life of misery before it. Hence, holy Job sums up the life of man in the following remarkable words: "*Man born of a woman, living for a short time, is filled with many miseries. Who cometh forth like a flower, and is destroyed, and fleeth as a shadow, and never continueth in the same state.*" (*Job* xiv. 1, 2).

Does not this description of man's life in this world accord with our experience? Not to speak of public calamities, such as wars, famines, and pestilences, have we not all, and each of us, our particular miseries to complain of? What family is without their trials and troubles? What individual is free from trials and troubles? And are they not on every side of us? Try to avoid them in this direction, and you are met by them in another direction. Therefore is it that "The Imitation" tells us: "The cross is everywhere prepared for thee, and everywhere awaits thee. Thou canst not escape it whither-

soever thou turnest thyself. Turn thyself upwards, turn thyself downwards, turn thyself inwards, turn thyself outwards, everywhere, and in everything, thou wilt find the cross. If thou dost cast away from thee one cross, thou shalt, beyond doubt, find another, and perhaps a heavier one. Thinkest thou, thou wilt escape what no mortal man could ever escape? Which of the saints was there ever in this world without his cross and tribulation? For, neither was the Lord Jesus one hour, during His whole life in this world, without the pain of suffering." But let me ask again, is not this our own experience both as regards ourselves and our fellow-beings all around us? Everywhere we hear of sickness in all forms, of death entering into families and taking away its victims, leaving grief and lamentation behind. Do we not hear constantly of the loss of goods, of the reverses of fortune, of the miseries of poverty and want, of the evil designs and evil doings of enemies, of strifes, jealousies, ill-will, hatred, revenge? Does not the evil of dissension invade family life, "*three against two, and two against three,*" as our Saviour says, "*the father against the son, and the son against his father, the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother, the mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.*" (*Luke* xii. 52, 53). On account of all these evils, the Holy Ghost tells us, by the pen of Ecclesiastes, that "*the day of one's death is better than the day of his birth;*" that our life is "*a pilgrimage.*" (*Eccles.* vii. 2, 1). And, in another place, He says, that "*all our days are full of sorrows and miseries*" (ii. 23), and are we not taught to say in that excellent prayer, "SALVE REGINA," that we are in this world "poor banished children of Eve," and the world itself is for us "a vale of tears?"

What, then, is our refuge and support in the midst of all these evils? It is in God our Father, Who is in heaven, and Who, from His high sanctuary, has His eyes always open on the ways of men, as His children, in this world. Therefore was it, that the pious Josaphat, surrounded on all sides with evils and miseries, cried out: "*Whereas we know not what to do, this only have we left, that we direct our eyes towards Thee.*" (2 *Paralip.* xx. 12). And St. Paul exhorts us, in all our necessities, spiritual and temporal, "*to go with confidence to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace in seasonable aid.*" (*Heb.* iv. 16). This we do when we recite the seventh Petition of

the Lord's Prayer; and our confidence should be unbounded, when we consider this Petition to be put into our mouths by our Divine Lord Himself, who, seated at the right hand of His Father, is our great Advocate and Mediator, to give effect to the prayer He Himself has taught us.

2. But does the Petition, "*Deliver us from evil*," mean that we beg of God to be exempted from trials and tribulations in this life, and that the world would become a paradise for us on earth? By no means. In sending us these trials and tribulations, or permitting them to befall us, our Heavenly Father has different ends in view, and our prayer is to be directed according to these ends.

In the first place, these trials and tribulations may be the very exercise of His love in our regard, the dealings of the best and fondest of parents to His well-beloved children. (Quote *Heb.* xii. 6, 7, 8; *Apoc.* iii. 19; *Prov.* iii. 11). It is so He has dealt, at all times, with the greatest saints, His design being in their regard; 1st, to afford them opportunities of earning the crown of glory reserved for those only who, according to St. Paul, "*will have striven lawfully for it*" (2 *Tim.* ii. 5), by bearing up against such trials and sufferings; 2ndly, to teach us our own weakness, and the necessity we have of recurring constantly to Him Who is our great Refuge and Support in all our tribulations; 3rdly, to wean us from the vanities of this world, and to lift up our minds to that abode of happiness, where "*neither mourning, nor crying, nor sorrow shall be any more.*" (*Apoc.* xxi. 4). We do not pray against trials, tribulations, and the evils of this life, when they are sent us by God for these or other ends of His fatherly love. Rather we are to pray for them as gifts and favours, "*coming down from the Father of lights*" (*James* i. 17), and we should thank, bless, and praise His blessed Name on account of them.

In the second place, it may be the design of our Heavenly Father to correct us of failings, and faults, and evil habits, into which we have unfortunately allowed ourselves to fall, and in which we continue to indulge. (Quote *Prov.* xiii. 24; xix. 18; xxix. 17, applying the texts to God, as our Father. Quote also *Heb.* xii. 6; *Ephes.* vi. 4). These are the chastisements of a good and loving Father, designed by Him to cure us of our bad habits, our errings and strayings, and bring us under the holy discipline of His authority and guidance. We do not pray to be exempted from trials and sufferings of this sort. They

proceed immediately from the love and goodness of our Heavenly Father, and we should receive them with all thankfulness, praising and blessing His fatherly care of us as the children of His love.

In the third place, God has it sometimes in view to make us experience His divine justice by punishing us, even in this world, on account of our sins, for, as the Psalmist says, "*Many are the scourges of the sinner.*" (*Ps.* xxxi. 10). He is merciful, but He is also just, and His justice requires of Him not to allow sin to pass unpunished. Hence, as we turn over the pages of the Old Testament, we read of the heavy punishments with which he visited the Jews of old, on account of their sins, and how again He pardoned them when they besought His mercy, repenting of the evil of their way. And we do not require the Inspired Writings to inform us of the calamities that have, at different times, even under the Christian Dispensation, fallen upon nations, on account of the widespread prevalence of iniquity amongst their inhabitants. Hence have wars sprung up so frequently, nation rising up against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, bringing pestilence, famine, and all sorts of miseries in their train, so that the history of the world is, for the greater part, the history of these calamities and miseries. And what history records on a large scale, as happening to peoples and kingdoms, do we not see occurring to individual sinners every day in the various private calamities with which the world abounds? We are to bring all these evils, public and private, before our minds, as we recite the Petition, "*Deliver us from evil;*" and we are to recollect besides, that we pray not alone for ourselves individually and exclusively, but also for all mankind at large, begging of our Father, Who is in heaven, "*to remember the bowels of his compassion, and His mercies, that are from the beginning of the world,*" and cease to visit our iniquities with the scourges of His justice. Oh! if we could get a glance into the secrets of God, in how many instances would we not see the arm of His vengeance uplifted for the punishment of sin, but arrested by the force of prayer. Yes, I say, the force of prayer, and I might add the omnipotence of prayer, by which God allows Himself to be overcome and subdued. What an example do we see of this in the prayer of Moses! God was enraged with the people, and was on the point of punishing them; but Moses prayed for them, whereupon God said to him:

"*Suffer me that my wrath may be kindled against them*" (*Exod.* xxxii. 10); as much as to say, I desire to punish the people, but your prayer stands in my way, and binds up my hands. On this account, St. Jerome says of prayer, that "it overcometh the invincible, and bindeth the Almighty." With what devotion, therefore, should we not recite the words, "*Deliver us from evil*," which, going forth constantly from the hearts and mouths of all the faithful, are all-powerful in restraining the anger of the Most High, and changing His justice into mercy towards poor sinners.

3. But we have been treating of temporal evils all this while. Must we not consider that spiritual evils are also included in the Petition, "*Deliver us from evil?*" Yes, and they are to be kept more in view than our mere temporal evils, as being so much more calamitous. Alas! sin is the greatest of all evils, nay, it is an essential evil, and properly speaking, the only real evil in the world. All other evils are only partially so, and may be turned to a good account by the dispositions with which we bear them. But sin is an unmixed evil, from which no good can be extracted. We should, therefore, bear this evil of evils especially in mind, when we say, "*Deliver us from evil.*" The preceding Petition, "*Lead us not into temptation,*" supposes us in the way of falling into sin, and in strict terms contemplates only the danger of sin. But our present Petition supposes that we have actually fallen into sin, and prays God to deliver us from it. Alas! our sins—we should always keep them in view like David, who constantly repeated, "*I know my iniquity, and my sin is always before me.*" (*Ps.* l. 5). We are also to recollect, that we pray for others as well as for ourselves, and that by our joint prayer we endeavour to move God to mercy "*that He may not revenge our sins, nor remember our offences.*" (*Tob.* iii. 3). Again, let me say, if we could but have a glance into the secrets of God, what would we not see? "Our prayer goes up," says St. Augustine, "and the mercy of God comes down." So it is; as we say "*Deliver us from evil*," our Petition ascends as incense in the sight of God, and the grace of repentance comes down, as a heavenly dew, on many a poor sinner, softening his heart to repentance, "*giving water to his head, and a fountain of tears to his eyes*" (*Jer.* ix. 1), to bewail his sins in the sight of heaven.

4. There is another sense in which we are to understand "evil," when in the Petition we say "*Deliver us from evil*," namely, as signifying him, who is rightly called the "evil

one," or the devil, because he is by his temptations the author and cause of sin in us, and God, moreover, uses him frequently as an instrument in punishing the wickedness and iniquities of mankind. We are, therefore, to offer up the Petition, that God would rescue us from the fangs of this evil one, and save us from the harm he is always desirous to inflict on us poor mortals. It is on this account the Petition says "*from evil*," in the singular number, not *from evils* in the plural number, because the evils that befall us from other agencies, are to be all traced to him, as their author and impelling cause, on which account we are to turn all our anger and hatred upon him. But as to our fellow-beings, from whom, at his suggestion, and by whose temptations, they are set upon us to do us evil, we are to include them in our prayer, that God would rescue them from the evil one, and that they would cease to be his instruments in doing evil to their fellow-creatures.

5. We come now to the final word, "*Amen*." This is the seal, as St. Jerome calls it, of the entire prayer, from beginning to end. The expression is a happy one, and very significant. When an official personage has written out a document, or causes a document to be written out for him, he puts his seal to it. He does so, making the document thereby his own, and identifying himself with all its contents. So, our Blessed Lord, having delivered the Lord's Prayer to His Apostles and disciples, added to it the word "*Amen*," to make it known to all mankind, that they were to recognise the prayer to be His in a special manner; His, not only in a general view of it, but His in every one of the seven Petitions it contains. We translate the word, and say it means "*so be it*," repeating thereby, the whole prayer in a summary way, and offering up its various Petitions in the name of Him who stamps it with this seal of His own authenticity. He frequently used the same word in His preaching, as we see in the Gospel, and, though a Hebrew word, the Church has preserved it in its original form, out of reverence for the use He made of it. She employs it after all her prayers in the service of the Mass, and throughout her liturgy, and wishes it to be pronounced by the faithful as an answer, by which they share in its supplications, and obtain its fruits. But, as terminating the Lord's Prayer, the word has a special significance, denoting that in pronouncing it we associate ourselves with our Lord, and He joins with us in the prayer He has Himself given

us. How heavenly the thought, that whilst we are reciting this final word "*Amen*" here on earth, our great Advocate and Mediator is presenting it, and with it the entire prayer, of which it is a summary, at "*the throne of grace, to obtain mercy for us, and find grace in seasonable aid.*" (*Heb.* iv. 16). So much did our Blessed Saviour love that word "*Amen*," that he brought it with him to heaven, and it resounds in the Heavenly Jerusalem, as part of the Adoration with which He is honoured, and will be honoured for all eternity. "*Every living creature*," says St. John, "*I heard all saying: To Him that sitteth on the throne, and to the Lamb, benediction, and honour, and glory, and power, for ever and ever. And the four living creatures said: Amen.*" (*Apoc.* v. 13). O, let us treasure the blessed hope, that by reciting fervently and constantly the Divine Prayer left us by our Lord, we may pass from this "*vale of tears*" with our "*Amen*" to join the heavenly host, as, prostrate on their faces, they sing with unceasing song: "*The Lamb that was slain is worthy to receive power, and divinity, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and benediction, for ever and ever.*" (*Apoc.* v. 12).

Conclusion.

Conclude by exhorting your audience to offer up this Divine Prayer with all confidence in the goodness of the universal Father Whom we address, and in the merits of the Passion of our Divine Redeemer, "*Whose word going forth from His mouth shall not return to Him void, but shall do whatever He pleases, and shall prosper in the things for which He sent it.*" (*Isai.* lv. 11).

Consult Catechism of the Council of Trent (*de Orat. Dom.*)

THE HAIL MARY.

"*Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women.*"—LUKE i. 28.

INTRODUCTION.

Thus spoke the Angel Gabriel to the Blessed Virgin, as he came to announce to her the mystery of the Incarnation; and thus, too, do we address her when we recite the "HAIL MARY" in our every-day devotions. We usually join it with the Lord's Prayer, saying it immediately after that Divine Prayer. This union of the two prayers in our daily devotions naturally suggests that, having considered the one, we should proceed to consider the other, in order the better to understand its meaning, and thereby dispose ourselves the better to recite it with increased fervour, and derive from it more abundant fruits.

[A few words to engage attention, and a short invocation.]

BODY OF THE SUBJECT.

1. *Why we are taught to recite the Hail Mary usually after the Lord's Prayer in our daily devotions.*

First reason.—If a subject approach a king or sovereign of any kind here on earth, to present a petition to him, he would be very glad if he could induce the mother of the sovereign to present it for him, and advocate the prayer it would contain; and if she would undertake this kind office, he would look upon his petition as certain of being granted. This supposition is a reality with us, when, after saying the Lord's Prayer, we immediately recite the "*Hail Mary.*" The Lord's Prayer contains all the favours and graces we stand in need of for soul and body, for time and eternity. We feel that if we had the intercession of the Blessed Virgin joined with our prayer—her intercession with her Divine Son—He would be pleased to plead in our behalf with His Eternal Father, and with such intercession on her part, we might well assure ourselves of the success of the various petitions we send up to the throne of God, as we recite the Lord's Prayer.

Quote, and apply, the example of the miracle of changing water into wine, at the Marriage feast. (*John* ii.)

Second reason.—The Holy Fathers tell us everywhere, that as we have recourse to our Divine Lord, as our great Advocate and Mediator of redemption and reconciliation with His Eternal Father, so, likewise, are we to have recourse to Mary as our Advocate and Mediatrix of intercession with her Divine Son. Our doing so cannot but be in every way agreeable to Him, Who, loving her with so tender a love, must feel pleased at the honour we render her in having recourse to her in this manner, and must, on that account, be more inclined to listen to us, or rather to the prayer we offer Him through her, than if we were to approach Him by ourselves alone. What we mean, therefore, in reciting the "Hail Mary" immediately after the Lord's Prayer is, that she would address her Divine Son in our behalf, and engage Him to plead the merits of His Passion and Death with His Eternal Father, to obtain for us the Petitions contained in the Prayer He Himself has left to mankind.

Third reason.—The Eternal Father Himself, and the Holy Ghost, as well as the Eternal Son, are also pleased to see us approach the throne of grace through Mary. Her place in heaven is above the angels and all the heavenly spirits. Therefore, if we are to honour them, we are to honour her still more, and if they by God's appointment render us signal services in the way of our salvation by their intercession, how much greater must not be the services rendered us by her who is the Queen of Angels, as well of men, and Sovereign Lady of the universe? Therefore is it, that the Holy Fathers teach us, that the Holy Ghost, who is her Spouse by the mystery of the Incarnation, and is the Author of grace, dispenses His graces through the hands of Mary. On this account St. Bernard exhorts us to venerate Mary with all the affection of our hearts; "because," as this great servant of Mary says, "such is the will of God, Who desires that we should have everything through Mary."

2. *Explanation of the terms of the Prayer.*

The first word of the "*Hail Mary*" is "Hail." This is a word of salutation, in which the Angel Gabriel expressed his respect and reverence for the Blessed Virgin, as he appeared in her presence on the part of God. O, could we penetrate all that this Angelic Salutation means! He came down from heaven full of the importance of his mission. He must have said to himself, as he was descending through the regions of

space: I am sent on the most important business that ever was committed to a messenger from heaven. A woman is chosen from amongst the daughters of Adam to be the Mother of the promised Redeemer. What a privilege! a privilege incomparably higher than any conferred upon the highest spirits encircling the throne of the Most High; and I am commissioned to tell her of this privilege. What respect is not due to such a favourite of heaven; and with what reverence am I not to salute her, when I come into her presence! So thought Gabriel on his way from the throne of God to the humble cottage of Mary. But on entering that cottage, and beholding her, the incomparable being, to whom he was sent—beholding her with the supernatural light of the Angel of God, what was his astonishment, accustomed as he was to all that is holy and perfect amongst the orders and hierarchies of the Court of Heaven, as he saw now before him a being surpassing them immeasurably in the greatness of her sanctity, and the loftiness of her perfection! With what reverence did he bow down before her, and with what deep respect did he salute her, saying, "Hail!" O, that we had a deep share in his respect and reverence, when, lifting up our voices to her from this "valley of tears," we address her, seated on her throne of glory, and say to her, "Hail Mary." Alas! instead of this respect and reverence, have we not to accuse ourselves of distraction and dissipation of mind when this Angelic Salutation passes through our lips?

The next words addressed by the Angel to Mary were, "*full of grace.*" O, that we could understand all the significance of these sacred words! "Full" is a word signifying more or less, according to the vessel that is full. If the vessel be large, its fulness will be great; if larger, its fulness will be greater; but if very large, its fulness will be very great in proportion. According to this rule we are to estimate Mary's fulness of grace. St. Bernardine of Sienna lays down the doctrine, that when the Almighty destines any one for a particular purpose of His providence, He grants him the means or graces required for this purpose. Then, in applying this rule to Mary, we are to ask the purpose for which she was destined in the decrees of God. Need I say that the purpose was higher, infinitely higher than any ever appointed for any other being under God Himself, whether Angel or Archangel, Throne or Domination, Power or Principality, or Virtue of heaven, Cherub or Seraph? It

was her ineffable destiny to have been singled out from amidst the whole range of creation for a dignity, which must remain for ever the astonishment even of the highest intelligences in heaven under God, the incomprehensible dignity of the Mother of God. Therefore, according to the doctrine of St. Bernardine, God must have prepared her for this incomprehensible dignity by a measure of grace in proportion to it. Relying on this reasoning, the Holy Fathers have no hesitation in affirming that Mary, even in the moment of her Immaculate Conception, was independently of that unspeakable prerogative, endowed with graces in greater abundance than all the Angels and Saints of God together. And if such was her fulness of grace in the first moment of her existence, how inconceivably must it have increased, time after time, moment after moment, up to the moment of her Annunciation!

The word Mary signifies a sea in one of its several meanings, and indicates that, as vessels made to contain some gallons of water cannot, whatever be their number, be compared to the sea, so all the Angels and Saints of God, whatever fulness of grace they were favoured with, cannot bear any comparison with Mary in the ocean, as we will say, of graces bestowed upon her. "To others," says St. Bernard, "grace is given in parcels, or in partial supplies, but upon Mary the whole fulness was poured out." And St. Anselm, in speaking of her purity alone, says: "it was fitting that the Virgin should be adorned with that purity, than which no greater under God can be conceived." What, therefore, should be our devotion, as we pronounce these words, "*full of grace!*"

Next follow the words, "*the Lord is with thee.*" These words of the Angel's message deserve our particular attention. The Lord is everywhere by His presence, but He is in a special way present to His saints. He makes them "His temple," as St. Paul teaches (1 *Cor.* iii. 16), abiding in them by a special in-dwelling; and this in-dwelling has its degrees of greater and lesser intimacy and familiarity. Consequently, this intimate and familiar presence of God with Mary must have exceeded that of all the other Saints, and even the highest Angels in heaven, as she was elevated above them by the sublime dignity of Mother of God. And as the Lord was thus present to Mary, and always with her, so she was always with Him in her thoughts and the affections of her heart, uniting herself with Him every

moment by the oblation of herself with all the faculties of her soul, and all the senses of her body, to His greater honour and glory.

After the words, "*the Lord is with thee*," the Angel proceeded to add, "*Blessed art thou amongst women;*" and St. Elizabeth, mother of John the Baptist, addressed her in the same words, as she had the happiness of being visited by her. O yes, blessed, and thrice blessed! Who so blessed on earth or in heaven? Chosen from amongst all the daughters of Adam by a special preference, for the incomprehensible dignity of becoming the mother of God incarnate, and blessed and sanctified for an honour by which she was to rank above all creation, she well deserved to be called "*Blessed amongst women.*" And when she had received Elizabeth's salutation, she herself breaking forth into the Canticle "*Magnificat*," said, amongst other things, that, "*because the Lord hath regarded my humility, all generations shall henceforth call me Blessed.*" So has it been ever since, so is it at present, and so is it to be till the end of time. Her name has gone with that of her Divine Son, and wherever His adorable Name has been venerated throughout the world, the name of Mary has been honoured with it, and she has been called "Blessed."

The remaining words of Elizabeth are, "*and blessed is the fruit of thy womb.*" O yes, this is the crowning dignity of Mary! Already had she conceived of the Holy Ghost, and the Word had been made flesh within her chaste womb. The Eternal Son of the Eternal Father is become man; He has taken flesh from the flesh of Mary alone, and it is Mary's blood alone that runs through His veins. He is the fruit, the ever-blessed fruit, of her womb, venerated, adored, and magnified by Elizabeth; and to be adored, venerated, and magnified by all the generations of men on earth, and all the choirs of angels in heaven!

We have now considered the first part of the "Hail Mary." The second part has been added by the Church. The occasion was eventful. The dignity of Mary was assailed, and she was denied the honour of being Mother of God by a heresy that sprung up in the East, in the early part of the fifth century. A General Council was convened at Ephesus to condemn the heresy, and the Fathers of the Council, after condemning it, added to the salutation of Gabriel and Elizabeth, the words, "Holy Mary, Mother of God," &c., thereby putting the glorious

title of Mother of God on the lips of all the faithful, to be pronounced in their daily devotions for ever thenceforward.

Relate the history of the occasion, describing the excitement of the people, and the enthusiasm with which they hailed the decision of the Council.

By this second part of the prayer we place ourselves under the patronage of the Blessed Mother of God during life, but more especially for the all-eventful moment of death.

Enlarge on the happiness of having Mary by our bedside, when leaving this world, &c.

Conclusion.

Conclude with some words of exhortation in conformity with the subject.

DEVOTION TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN.

"My Mother, ask: for I must not turn away thy face."—3 Kings ii. 20.

Introduction.

Refer in general terms to the preceding subjects on prayer, and **observe**, that it is to God we chiefly address ourselves in prayer, as the fountain and giver of all good gifts; but that our religion, nevertheless, teaches us to address ourselves to the Blessed Virgin, and the Angels and Saints also. However, we must keep in mind, that in directing our prayers to the Angels and Saints, or even to the Blessed Virgin herself, we only put our petitions into their hands, not that they may give us of themselves what we ask, but that they may use, in our behalf, the influence they have with God to obtain what we ask. **Make the comparison** of a subject presenting a petition to an earthly sovereign. He would desire to engage the sovereign's mother, or sons, or daughters, or persons having high influence at court, &c.

Then **observe**, that understanding this distinction between the conditions of our prayers as addressed to God, and those we

address to the Blessed Virgin, as also to the Angels and Saints, we have the course clear to treat of devotion to the Blessed Virgin in the first place, and then to the Angels and Saints in the next. For the present instruction, however, we will confine ourselves to the devotion we render to the Blessed Virgin.

[A few words to engage attention, followed by an invocation.]

Body of the Subject.

1. *Motives of our devotion to the Blessed Virgin.*

1st, Her position with regard to the Eternal Father. 2ndly, Her position with regard to the Eternal Son. 3rdly, Her position with regard to the Holy Ghost. 4thly, The share she has had in our redemption, on which account she most earnestly wishes our salvation, and all the graces we stand in need of to be saved.

2. *Practices of devotion to the Blessed Virgin.*

1st, To celebrate her festivals. 2ndly, To be enrolled in some of her societies (**mention** some of them). 3rdly, To recite her Rosary, or the third part of it, every day. (Here **notice** the practice of pious families to this effect. **Speak** of the beads, and the Living Rosary.) 4thly, Shorter devotions, such as (**give examples.**) 5thly, To read occasionally some book inculcating her devotion, *e.g.*, "The Glories of Mary."

Conclusion.

Conclude by a summary of the motives with some words of exhortation.

Consult Guillet's "Projets d'Instructions," cxxxi. Inst., Bishop Hay's "Sincere Christian," vol. 2, chap. xxviii. sec. 6, &c.

N.B.—Infer, from the three first motives as above, the influence of the Blessed Virgin to obtain all the graces and blessings we stand in need of; and from the fourth infer her willingness to exert this influence in our behalf, and combine both inferences into a summary motive of confidence in her intercession.

DEVOTION TO ANGELS AND SAINTS.

"*And the smoke of the incense of the prayers of the saints ascended up before God from the hand of the Angel.*"—APOC. viii. 4.

INTRODUCTION.

Refer to the previous instruction, and **observe**, that as we honour the Blessed Virgin with a homage in accordance with her prominent place in glory, so also we honour the Saints and Angels reigning with God in heaven, with a suitable religious worship, according to their rank in the court of God.

Notice, that there are three kinds of religious worship, one called "Latria," which signifies the supreme worship due to God alone; another "Dulia," an inferior worship, which we give to the Angels and Saints of God; but above this inferior worship, there is a worship called "Hyperdulia," or special inferior worship reserved for the Blessed Virgin, by which we honour her, not only more than the Angels and Saints, but in a special manner above them, as excelling them immeasurably in merits and dignity, occupying a position and rank above them, and specially her own, and thereby entitled to a worship specially her own also, yet a worship inferior to, and of a different kind from, the supreme worship we give Almighty God.

Proceed to say, that having treated of the special honour we pay to our Blessed Lady, it will be according to order to speak of the honour due to the Angels and Saints.

[A few words to bespeak attention, and an invocation.]

BODY OF THE SUBJECT.

1. *Motives for honouring the Angels and Saints.*

1st. Enjoined by the Sacred Scriptures. **Quote** "Butler's Lives of the Saints," Oct. 2, on Guardian Angels.

2ndly. Examples in the Scriptures. **Refer** to Abraham, *Gen.* xviii.; Lot, *Gen.* xix.; *Josue* v. 15; St. Cecilia, 22nd Nov.; St. Frances, 9th March (*vid. Breviary*).

3rdly. The services they render us. **Refer** to the vision of Jacob, *Gen.* xxviii.; 4 *Kings* xix. 35; *Tob.* iii. 25; *Judith* xiii. 20; *Matt.* i

20, 24 ; ii. 13, 19 ; xxviii. 2, 5 ; *Luke* i. 19, 26, 28 ; ii. 9 ; xxiv. 4 ; *John* v. 4 ; *Acts*, i. 10 ; v. 19 ; viii. 26 ; xii. 7, 23 ; xxvii. 23.

N.B.—All these texts hold equally for Saints, as our Saviour says: "*They will be like the Angels in heaven.*" (*Matt.* xxii. 30). See other texts regarding Saints in the table of references of Douay Bible at the end.

2. *Doctrinal explanations.*

1st. That worship of Saints and Angels is good and lawful. *Council of Trent.*

2ndly. The favours we receive, not from them, but from God, through their intercession.

3rdly. That their intercession has its effect only through the merits of Christ.

3. *Modes of honouring the Angels and Saints.*

1st. By devoutly celebrating their festivals.

2ndly. By invoking them in our daily prayers. (*Apoc.* viii. 3, 4 ; *Tob.* xii. 12), our Guardian Angels especially.

3rdly. By venerating the relics of the Saints.

Examples. The cloak of Elias, 4 *Kings* ii. 14; the dead body of Eliseus, 4 *Kings* xiii. 21; *Acts* xix. 12 ; fact of Babylas Martyr, his sacred remains silencing the oracle of Apollo at Daphne, near Antioch. See in "Butler's Lives of the Saints," Jan. 24, life of the Saint towards the end.

Conclusion.

Conclude with some words of exhortation.

Consult Guillet's "Projets d'Instructions," cxxxviii., cxxxix. Insts ; Bishop Hay's "Sincere Christian," vol. 2, chap. xxviii. secs. 3, 4, 5, ; Theology on the subject. Also "Soliloquies of St. Augustine," chap. xxvii., respecting Guardian Angels.

RELIGIOUS EMBLEMS.

"*Thou shalt make also two cherubims of beaten gold, on the two sides of the oracle.*"—EXOD. xxv. 18.

INTRODUCTION.

External objects convey their impressions to our minds through the various senses of the body, and the sight is a vehicle of religious instruction, and impression by the pious objects we look at, as our hearing is by what is addressed to our ears. Hence, pious emblems, such as pictures, crucifixes, statuary, &c., have been encouraged, not only in the Christian Religion, but also in the Old Law, as helps to piety by the language which they address to our eyes, as we look on them, either in our churches or our private homes. It will, therefore, be useful to bestow some reflections on so practical a subject, especially as it is a topic of controversy between us and persons differing from us in religion.

[A few words of invocation.]

1. *Proofs of the lawfulness and advantages of holy emblems.*

1st. See "References" at the end of Douay Bible, under the title "Images."

2ndly, Quote St. Paul, *Rom.* i. 20, and apply the text by saying that in the same way as the visible works of God, in the objects of creation exposed to our view, should lead us to know Him, and think of His invisible Power and Divinity, so likewise, sacred emblems speak to our eyes, and make us think of the sacred things they represent.

3rdly. Council of Trent, sess. xxv. See also Catechism of the Council on the subject, part 3, chap. ii., sec. xxxix.

4thly. *Reason.* That, when we love and respect any one, we wish to have his likeness. Why? To think of him frequently, and to renew our sentiments of esteem, &c., for him. Apply.

5thly. If we have been in, or wish to go to, any strange country or place, we would like to have a map of that country, or some of its products, or curiosities, in order to remind ourselves of it, &c. Apply this to heaven.

2. *Effects of emblems and sacred imagery in our churches.*

The altar reminds us of the sacrifice offered on it. The crucifix over it reminds us of that sacrifice being the same as the sacrifice of the cross. The figure of the Blessed Virgin reminds us of the Incarnation and humiliation of God made man, as well as the exaltation of the Blessed Virgin to the sublime dignity of the Mother of God, &c. As we gaze on the pictures of the Saints, we see in one the virtue of humility, in another mortification, &c., so that, all the time we are looking at these sacred objects, we feel as if in heaven, and we realize in ourselves the words of the Apostle: "*Our conversation is in heaven.*" (*Philip* iii. 20).

3. Having thus spoken of the church, go on to say, that it is not only in the church, but in his own private home, that the Christian enjoys the advantages of pious emblems. Every home should have its crucifix; nay, every room. What a constant sermon is not this Memorial of our Redemption, displaying to us the love of our Divine Lord, the enormity of sin, &c. What sweet sentiments do we not experience, even by a glance at a picture, or little statue of the Blessed Virgin. Every home should have one, and it should be the object of particular devotion on her festivals, and the whole month of May. Speak of the pictures and memorials of the saints, in the same way, and recommend pious little pictures as bookmarkers.

Conclusion.

Conclude by a summing up of the reasons or motives, and some words of exhortation.

Consult Council of Trent and Catechism of the Council; also, as referred to above, Bishop Hay's "Sincere Christian," vol. 2, chap. xxviii. sec. 7, and Guillet's "Projets d'Instructions," xli Inst.

PRESENCE OF GOD.

"*We ought always to pray.*"—LUKE xviii. 1.

INTRODUCTION.

These are our Saviour's words. It concerns us exceedingly to understand their meaning, that we may comply with the duty they point out. It cannot be expected of us to be always on our knees, to have a prayer-book always in hand, or to be continually reciting prayers with our lips. There must, then, be some other means of fulfilling the duty of praying always. Yes, and amongst these means the chief and most efficacious one is to keep ourselves constantly in God's holy presence, or as it is called by spiritual writers, "the exercise of the presence of God;" an exercise to which they attach the greatest importance.

[Announce this as your subject, and after a short invocation proceed to lay down the motives for the exercise.]

BODY OF THE SUBJECT.

1. *Motives.*

1st. The first motive grounded on the fact that God is always present to us, wherever we are. Quote texts, "*If I ascend into heaven,*" *&c.* (*Ps.* cxxxviii. 8); "*In Him we move,*" *&c.* (*Acts* xvii. 28). Hence infer that to keep ourselves always in mind of Him, &c., is a tribute due to His immensity and ubiquity, &c.

2ndly. The example of the Saints of God at all times. Henoch, *Gen.* v. 24; Abraham, *Gen.* xvii. 1. The Patriarchs and Saints of the Old Law scarcely opened their mouths on any subject without speaking of God. So also the Saints of the New Law, as we see by their writings, thereby showing how they were always impressed with the thought of God, being present, &c. Quote "*Out of the abundance of the heart, &c.*" (*Matt.* xii. 34).

3rdly *A great restraint on temptation.*

Develop this motive by comparison of how we feel in the presence of some great person, &c. Quote *Ps.* cxxii. 1, 2, 3).

4thly. A great incentive to virtue by considering that God is present to take account of our virtuous conduct for merit and reward, even to the mere giving of a cup of cold water in His name. Quote *Matt.* x. 42, as representing the habitual feeling of a soul that is thoughtful of God's presence.

5thly. A great consolation in all our sorrows and afflictions by thinking that He beholds us, and so far from being indifferent to what we suffer, He has designs of mercy and love in our regard in all sufferings.

N.B.—Inculcate the exercise under each motive before proceeding to another.

2. *In what the exercise of the presence of God consists.*

In thinking of God as being present, and honouring Him as being present. **Comparison** of being in the presence of some distinguished personage, prince, bishop, &c. We would undoubtedly think of him, in whose presence we were, and honour him according to his dignity. In the same way, in regard to the presence of God. **Quote** St. Augustine: "So, too, a devout servant of God conducts himself in all his works, with all the circumspection and attention, as if God were present before his eyes, as He really is present. He prays as one taken up on high, and presented before the face of the Divine Majesty, seated upon His throne of glory in the midst of the thousands upon thousands of heavenly spirits who minister to Him, and the ten thousand times a hundred thousand who stand before Him." (*Man.* xix.)

3. *The means for practising the exercise.*

1st. To have some special occasions for formally thinking of God being present, and offering Him some acts of piety at these times.

2ndly. In all sudden occurrences to raise one's heart to God with some act of devotion. **Observe** how simple and humble souls are in the habit of using this means.

3rdly. To acquire the habit of acknowledging God present and acting in all His works. **Refer** to *Ps.* "*Benedicite.*"

4thly. Pious ejaculations. Here **dwell** on ejaculations, **telling** what they are, and **giving** examples.

Conclusion.

Recapitulate motives, and finish with some words of exhortation.

Consult Rodriguez, vol. 1, Sixth Treatise, also Bourdaloue's "Spiritual Retreat," on the subject.

EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE.

"*I meditated in the night with my own heart; and I was exercised and I swept my spirit.*"—Ps. lxxvi. 7.

Introduction.

These remarkable words of the Psalmist point out to us a duty which should be very precious to every Christian soul. We advance in the way of virtue chiefly by two means, viz., vigilance, and a constant renewal of our good resolutions. It is with a view to these two effects that all spiritual writers recommend so zealously the practice of examining our conscience at least once a day before retiring to rest.

[Announce this to be your subject. Invite attention, and offer up a short invocation.]

Body of the Subject.

1. *Motives for examining our conscience every day.*

1st. We disarm God's justice, according to the words of St. Paul (1 *Cor.* xi. 31), on which make a few words of comment, and add the assurance of St. Chrysostom, that "If we persevere in this practice, we may stand without fear before the judgment-seat of Christ."

2ndly. The example of all pious souls, on which account all our books of piety present a form, or method, of making this examination. Quote example of David, repeating your text, and adding a few words of comment, observing how, after this practice, as he retired to rest, he watered his couch or bed with his tears, and he recommends us that "*the things we say in our hearts, we be sorry for them upon our beds.*" (*Ps.* iv. 5).

3rdly. That by this practice we watch over our conduct much more during the day, having to bring ourselves to an account at night of all our thoughts, words, and actions before Him, who has been witness of even the inmost secrets of our hearts. Example of an accountant, who has to account for the transactions of the day with his employer every evening.

4thly. By expressing our sorrow to God in the evening for our offences during the day, and renewing our good resolutions, we urge ourselves onward to renewed efforts in God's service

next day, and thus, with the assistance of His grace, we make daily progress in virtue, &c.

5thly. An excellent preparation for confession. **Show how**, as regards the examination of conscience required before confession.

6thly. An excellent preparation for death. **Observe** how sleep resembles death, so that the Scriptures speak of death as sleeping in the Lord, *e.g.*, our Saviour speaking of Lazarus (*John* xi. 11). Therefore, we should endeavour to settle accounts with God, and put our souls in order as if we were never to rise from the bed we are going to lie upon. This is done by a good examination of conscience.

After these motives, **exhort** to the practice, and **invite** your audience to come with you, as you will explain in what the examination of conscience consists.

2. *In what the examination of conscience consists.*

Distinguish between the general examination and the particular. **Explain** each. In explaining the particular examination, **illustrate** its object and effect by the example of David slaying Goliath, by which act the whole army of the Philistines was put to flight. **Apply**, by representing our predominant passion as a Goliath, &c. **Observe**, that if a person cannot conveniently take a particular time, as in Communities, for the particular examination, it can be made in conjunction with the general, giving it the first place.

3. *Means or method of the examination.*

1st. To place ourselves in God's presence as criminals before their judge, &c.

2ndly. To thank Him for His mercies, and especially for having spared us in our sins.

3rdly. To beg light.

4thly. To exercise our memory in endeavouring to recollect our sins of thought, word, deed, and omission against God, our neighbour and ourselves, passing in review all the occurrences of the day, where we were, what we did, what we did not do, what company we were in, &c.

5thly. To express our sorrow to God, and renew our good resolutions.

CONCLUSION.

N.B.—Dwell on each of these means, this being the most practical division of the subject.

Recapitulate briefly, and **exhort** to be faithful to the practice

Consult Rodriguez, vol. 1, Seventh Treatise.

ON SPIRITUAL READING.

"*Attend unto reading.*"—1 Tim. iv. 13.

Introduction.

Cast a look back on the subject of Prayer, and observe that, having treated it so much at large, you are induced to speak on a kindred subject of great importance, indicated in the words of your text: words addressed by St. Paul to his beloved disciple Timothy, in which he exhorted him to attend unto reading. Proceed to say, that wishing to inculcate the same good practice of spiritual reading, you would ask the best attention of your audience, begging of them to lift up their minds and hearts on high, to obtain of God the light and grace necessary for properly understanding and duly appreciating so important a subject.

Body of the Subject.

1. *The importance of spiritual reading.*

The importance of spiritual reading, or of frequently reading pious books, appears from various reasons. In the first place, it is most earnestly recommended by all the masters of the spiritual life. We have the words of St. Paul to Timothy, as quoted in the text. (Quote again). And the Apostle adds: *For in doing this thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee.*" (*Ibid.*)

In the Old Law the Sacred Writings were constantly read in the Jewish Synagogue, and the faithful were by this means kept in mind of their religious obligations. And in the New Dispensation as well, did not the Evangelists write the Gospels; and the other Sacred Writers, did they not write their Epistles, that they might furnish to the faithful matter for spiritual reading? Accordingly, St. Paul says of the Sacred Scriptures: "*All Scripture inspired by God,*" &c. (2 *Tim.* iii. 16, 17).

The Holy Fathers have been uniform from the beginning in inculcating the practice of spiritual reading. St. Athanasius makes it a necessary condition of Christian life. "You will see no one," says this great saint, "truly intent on God's service, who is not also given to reading." (Exhort *ad Relig.*) St. Jerome, writing to his holy disciple Eustochium, exhorts her in the

following remarkable words: "Let sleep come upon you with a book in your hand, and let the Holy Scriptures receive your declining head."

The founders of Religious Orders in the Church had different inspirations from God for the various Institutes they established, and therefore enacted different rules and observances for their disciples; but, as to spiritual reading, they were all of one mind as to its importance and they have been uniform in prescribing its constant practice.

But, coming down from such high authority, do we not all know as a matter of experience and fact, that all good Christians, as St. Athanasius said in his own day, are fond of pious reading, and, on that account, procure pious books to provide a daily food for their souls, which they esteem and value beyond the material food they use for the nourishment of their mortal bodies, &c.

To show the importance we should attach to spiritual reading, the saints compare it to preaching the Word of God, and they point out several advantages the former has over the latter. First, we cannot hear a sermon, or an instruction, whenever we like, whereas we can have a pious book always to hand. Secondly, the words we hear from the lips of a preacher pass on like a bird on the wing, and completely escape us, if we be distracted at the moment, if the preacher's voice be wanting in distinctness, or does not reach us, or if otherwise we may notbe able to understand his language, or follow him through his discourse. On the contrary, we have the book before our eyes, we may read it as leisurely as we please, pause here and there to understand it better, and return upon it again and again, to deepen in our minds the impressions the author desires to produce. And, in the third place, a book holds the same language to all without offending any one, whilst in season, and out of season, it reproves us, it entreats us, it rebukes us, without respect of persons, and entirely free from the restraints, which so often tie up the tongue of a preacher.

A further great advantage of spiritual reading is, that it bringsus into a holycompanionship with the most learned doctors and the most eminent saints of the Church of God from the beginning, nay, with the Saint of Saints, our Divine Lord Himself. For, if we actually lived in their day, and had the advantage of being their disciples, listening constantly to their admonitions and instructions, what would they say to us, that they

do not say in the books we have had from them? And what would our Divine Lord Himself say to us better or more holy than the words of eternal life, as we have them in the Gospels? Therefore may we say with St. Paul, that by spiritual reading, "*our conversation is in heaven*" (*Phil.* iii. 20), and that we have access, according to the words of the same Apostle, "*to the Church of the first-born*," *&c.* (*Heb.* xii. 23, 24).

[Words of admiration, &c.]

Exhort in accordance with the foregoing considerations.

2. *Dispositions required for spiritual reading.*

The first disposition: To read as if we heard God Himself addressing to us the words we read. Holy writers speak as God spoke to them, either immediately by personal inspiration, or at least they derive what they say from sources originally inspired, so that we may apply to them all, in a certain sense, the words of St. Peter: "*The holy men of God spoke, inspired by the Holy Ghost.*" (2 *Peter* ii. 21).

Enlarge, to inculcate the respect and reverence with which one should open a spiritual book to read it, and which should be maintained during the time of reading.

Second disposition: To read, as if the matter of our reading were a letter that had come to us from our true country, heaven, which we hope to arrive at, as we finish our pilgrimage in this land of exile.

Illustrate by reference to the interest with which people receive and read letters from friends in America, or Australia, or any foreign country, more particularly if they intend sooner or later to go and join them; and apply the comparison.

Third disposition: A further disposition is recommended us by St. Gregory, which is, that we would take up a pious book as a spiritual looking-glass, to examine the state of our soul in it.

Illustrate by observing how a looking-glass shows us to ourselves exhibiting to our eyes any stains, or spots, anything unseemly or unsightly that we have on our face or on our dress. In the same way, a spiritual book puts us face to face with our soul within us, to see all its blemishes, that is, its passions, inclinations, vices, &c. And as we use a looking-glass in order to set right all that may be wrong in our outward appearance, so likewise should we read with the same intention as to our interior.

3. *Method and conditions to be observed in spiritual reading.*

1st. To read slowly, and with earnest application of our minds. (**Enlarge.**)

2ndly. To elevate our souls occasionally to God, according to the considerations and sentiments we observe in our lecture, and thus make our lecture partake of the nature of prayer.

3rdly. Not to read much at a time, in order the better to remember what we read, and make practical application of it to ourselves.

4thly. To dwell especially on such passages as strike us most in the course of our lecture.

5thly. To endeavour to take away from our reading the recollection of what we have read, bearing in mind that, as in our corporal food, it is not all we eat, but all we digest, that does us good, so likewise in the spiritual refection afforded us by pious reading, it is not all we read, but all we digest, by remembering it and reflecting upon it, that does good to our souls.

6thly. Not to tire of a good book, for having read it once or twice. 'The man of one book' is a proverb. Every time we read anew what we find to suit our spiritual condition, we derive additional advantage from it, far greater than if we were to change the matter of our reading. St. Francis of Sales continued to read over and over again the one book, and that a small book, the "Spiritual Combat," for twenty years. The repeated reading of the same book has the further advantage of guarding against a spirit of curiosity, which sometimes insinuates itself into our spiritual reading, and seriously prevents it producing the fruits we should reap from it.

Observe, it was by observing this method and these conditions, that so many have been induced to change their lives, some giving up sin and turning to God, others rising from a state of tepidity to fervour in God's service, and others still, who already advanced in virtue, were excited to increased fervour and piety. **Instance** St. Augustine, St. Ignatius of Loyola, &c.

Books for Spiritual Reading.

First, and for every reason, the Holy Scriptures, which may be called the Book of books, on which account it is termed "The Bible," or emphatically *the* Book. But, like the best of food, which may do harm if not used with certain conditions, so

the reading of the Sacred Scriptures may cause, and does cause, great spiritual detriment, as St. Peter tells us, where he says of the Epistles of St. Paul, that "*the unlearned and the unstable wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, to their own destruction.* (2 *Peter* iii. 16).

Explain the **conditions**, and **insist** especially on submission to the Church, and her Pastors, **observing** how the disciples inquired of our Lord the meaning of what they did not understand in His preaching.

Secondly, "The Imitation of Christ," which, like the Manna in the desert, that "*had all that is delicious, and the sweetness of every taste*" (*Wisd.* xvi. 20), possesses likewise a spiritual sweetness to be relished by every state of mind and every condition of soul.

Thirdly, such books as keep us in view of our last end, such as "Think well on it;" St. Liguori's "Preparation for Death," "Passage from Time to Eternity," by Neiremberg, S.J.; "Hell open to Christians," &c.

Fourthly, books to maintain a spirit of compunction, such as the "Sinner's Guide," "Memorial of Christian Life," &c.

Fifthly, books of Instruction, and ascetical works at choice according to every one's disposition, or advice of one's director, to be seen in printed catalogues of books.

Conclusion.

Conclude by a fervent exhortation to the practice of spiritual reading, drawing on the foregoing motives for the purpose.

Consult Rodriguez' "Christian Perfection," vol. 1. Treatise v., chap. xxviii.

ON MEDITATION, OR MENTAL PRAYER.

"*With desolation is all the land made desolate; because there is none that considereth in the heart.*"—JER. xii. 11.

INTRODUCTION.

In treating of Spiritual Reading, we have taken notice of the affinity between that subject and Prayer. This affinity is seen particularly in that kind of prayer called Meditation, or Mental Prayer. Amongst the conditions required to render Spiritual Reading profitable and salutary in its effects, it is especially pointed out, that we should not read much at a time, and that we should read slowly, and even pause now and then, in order to relish more and more, and to impress more deeply on our minds, certain passages that particularly affect us, as we go along. This slowness and pausing in our reading are Meditation in effect, to a certain extent, on which account Spiritual Reading conduces to Meditation, and is recommended in certain cases as a substitute for it. Therefore, after having treated of the subject of Spiritual Reading, we should naturally feel disposed to speak of its cognate subject, Meditation, or Mental Prayer. We will see the importance of this subject in the reflections we will have to make upon it, on which account let us raise our hearts on high, and beg of God the grace to profit of an instruction so conducive to our spiritual interests and welfare.

BODY OF THE SUBJECT.

1. *Motives.*

There are several motives which present to us the importance and advantages of Meditation. The First motive is contained in the words of the Prophet Jeremias, as quoted in our text, "*With desolation,*" *&c.*

In developing this motive, ask, why, according to St. John, "*the whole world is seated in wickedness*" (1 *John* v. 19); why, according to the same Apostle, "*all that is in the world is the concupiscence,*" *&c.* (Quote the text fully, 1 *John* ii. 16); why the greater part of mankind are going forward on the broad road that leads to perdition; why the world is full of sinners of all kinds, as the Apostle St. Paul complains, "*fornicators, idolaters,*" *&c.* (1 *Cor.* vi. 9, 10). Extend the enumeration by reference to the Seven Capital Sins, the Commandments of God and Precepts of the Church, &c.; and, repeating the question why, &c., answer, because men do not think, reiterating text,

"*With desolation*," *&c.* Draw the inference that Meditation would be a remedy for all this evil, &c.

Second Motive. Our Saviour complains that "*the children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light.*" (*Luke* xvi. 8).

To develop this motive, make a cursory review of the various secular professions and states of life, showing the activity men display, the labours they undergo, &c., in pursuit of their temporal interests, and draw the contrast, whence conclude that Meditation would remedy this great and wide-spread perversion in the life of mankind.

Third motive. We cannot make our vocal prayers with the required dispositions, unless we practise Meditation to, at least, some extent, and hence the prayers, the very prayers of so many, as the Psalmist says, "*may be turned into sin.*" (*Ps.* cviii. 7).

Enlarge upon this, by observing, how often people pray vocally in merely passing through their lips the words of the prayers they recite, and how many with prayer-book in hand read the prayers they have before them with their eyes merely. Say of such persons how God complains, that "*all such people honour Him with their lips; but their heart is far from Him.*" (*Matt.* xv 8). Conclude, that if they had somewhat the habit of Meditation, they would pray with their mind and heart, whilst reciting their vocal prayers, or using their prayer-book.

2. *Method of Mental Prayer, or Meditation.*

It is an ordinary complaint with even well disposed Christians that they find they cannot meditate, that they do not know how to meditate, and that, if they did, they would gladly give themselves to a practice so salutary, &c. Hence, it is a matter of great importance to have a method of Meditation clearly explained and well understood; whence proceed to lay down the following method:

The practice of Meditation has three distinct stages, *the Preparation, the Body of the Meditation, and the Conclusion.*

The Preparation is of two kinds, remote and proximate. The remote preparation begins from the evening before, it being supposed that the morning is the time chosen for making the Meditation. It consists in reading attentively over-night the subject to be meditated upon, in retiring to rest with the subject before the mind in a general view of it, and in recalling it in the same general way, when rising in the morning, and so keeping the mind engaged with it, till the Meditation be actually commenced. This preparation of mind is of great importance,

and the Holy Ghost Himself enjoins it in a special manner, saying, "*Before prayer prepare thy soul; and be not as a man that tempteth God.*" (*Eccli.* xviii. 23).

The immediate or proximate *preparation*, is made in commencing Meditation as an actual beginning, and an integral part, of the exercise itself. It consists in four several acts, viz.: *An act of faith in God's holy presence; an act of adoration; an act of humility; and an act of petition or invocation*, to obtain the Divine assistance, to make the Meditation in a proper manner. After invoking God directly, one may invoke the Blessed Virgin, St. Joseph, one's guardian angel and patron saint, together with the saint or saints of the day, as also one's monthly patron, as allotted by the Sodality of the "Living Rosary," or other pious institute, of which a person may be a member.

Having made these four acts briefly, but with great fervour, we proceed to the *Body* of the Meditation. It consists of four sets of spiritual acts, namely: *Considerations*, *affections*, *resolutions*, and *petitions*, all which are performed in due order.

The Considerations are made by the mind thinking on the subject. They are of different kinds, according as the subject is a moral or speculative one.

If it be a moral subject, presenting something to be avoided, or something to be done, in pursuance of the universal maxim, "*Decline from evil, and do good*" (*Ps.* xxxvi. 27), the considerations usually take account of the motives in one direction, or the other, and are generally supplied, or suggested, by the subject itself. For this purpose, the memory, taking hold, as it were, of the subject, holds it up to the view of the understanding, to be examined and considered by it, until it approves of, and adopts, the motives proposed.

When the subject is a speculative one, the considerations take a different form. In such a case, the subject presents some truth or mystery of religion, or religious fact, to be meditated upon. Subjects of this kind are usually invested with circumstances, answering to the well-known formula, "*Who? what? where? with what aids or helps? why? how? when?*" and the imagination, seizing on these circumstances, creates, in a manner, a palpable and life-like scene, which it presents to the understanding to inspect and contemplate, and by so doing to take from it motives applicable to the conduct of one's life.

In these *considerations*, whether on moral or speculative subjects, the mind is actuated by a spirit of faith and piety, and is

naturally led forward to *affections*, which constitute the second set of spiritual acts belonging to the Body of Meditation.

These *affections* are certain uprisings of the soul to God, analogous to the considerations, as being produced by them. They belong, therefore, to the emotional part of the soul, and are very various. They may be arranged in alphabetical order, as follows: *accusation*, *admiration*, *benediction*, *commination*, or threatening one's self; *compassion*, *complaint*, *compunction*, *confession*, *congratulation*, *desire*, *detestation*, *exhortation*, or *self-encouragement*; *faith*, *gladness*, *gratitude*, *hope*, *humiliation*, *imitation*, *love*, *oblation*, *obsecration*, *petition*, *praise*, or extolling the power, goodness, or other perfections of God; *preference*, by esteeming the things of heaven above the things of this world, &c.; *purpose*, *renunciation*, *reprehension*, or *self-reproach*; *resignation*, *solace*, or *self-encouragement*; *solicitation* and *zeal*.

These *affections*, or uprisings of the soul to God, naturally stimulate the mind to the adoption of *resolutions*, which are the third set of mental acts comprised in the Body of Meditation.

Resolutions reach forward to acts, and thus Meditation, step by step, is made to exercise its influence upon our lives and habits. But we are always to bear in mind, that our resolutions can avail us little, except in so far as they are seconded by God's grace and help; and, on that account, we have recourse, in the fourth place, to *petitions*, in order to carry our *resolutions* into practical effect.

These *petitions* we address to God in various ways: sometimes appealing directly to His Divine mercy, goodness, and love; sometimes interposing the various mysteries wrought for our salvation, especially our Saviour's sufferings and death; and sometimes presenting our petitions through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin, St. Joseph, our Guardian Angel, Patron Saint, &c.

In our books of Meditations, the subjects are generally divided into three parts, each part presenting a different view of it; on which account the four sets of acts just mentioned are repeated for each.

It is a mistake to dwell unduly on the *considerations* forming the first set of acts in the Body of Meditation. They are used only as means to the other acts that follow, and consequently to give overmuch time to them, would be losing the end, so far, in the means. Spiritual writers employ a very simple and familiar illustration to clear up this matter. They say, you want to take fire from a flint; for this purpose you take the flint in one hand,

and wrap around it some ignitible matter, and, in the other, you take a piece of steel, and strike it against the flint. You strike, and strike again, eliciting sparks, until they will have had their effect, producing ignition in the ignitible matter with which the flint is enveloped; and this done, what would you further do? Would you not give over striking, and use the ignited matter for the practical purpose you had in view from the beginning? In applying the illustration, we are to substitute for the flint, the subject of our Meditation, which we wrap up, so to say, in our minds; and for the steel our understanding, which, by repeated *considerations*, acts on the subject, as if striking it. In doing so, it elicits motives and sentiments, which act as a sacred fire on the emotional part of the soul, so as to make us feel like the disciples on their way to Emmaus, who, referring to the words our Saviour had addressed to them, said, one to the other: "*Was not our heart burning within us, whilst He spoke in the way, and opened to us the Scriptures?*" (*Luke* xxiv. 32). This is the effect the Psalmist describes, when he says: "*My heart grew hot within me; and in my meditation a fire shall flame out.*" (*Ps.* xxxviii. 4). This result being attained, what is to be done? Give over striking, that is, suspend the work of the understanding; your *considerations* have done their work; and let the fire they have excited act upon your feelings in producing *affections*, *resolutions*, and *petitions*. But the fire may cool down and go out; well, if it do, have recourse again to your flint and steel; employ your mind once more in beating upon the subject, by renewing your *considerations*, and "*the fire will flame out*" afresh, producing new *affections*, followed by new *resolutions* and *petitions*.

In these several ways it is seen how the whole mind is absorbed in the work of Meditation; the memory, the imagination, the understanding, and the will; and these great faculties of the soul are brought into combined action, to exercise their influence conjointly for the direction of our conduct in the various details of life.

3. It remains only to say a few words on the conclusion of Meditation. It consists of the following acts: *thanksgiving, begging pardon, oblation*, and *petition*. *In the first place*, we should thank God as we conclude our Meditation. If accorded an audience by some exalted personage, we should, as a matter of course, and obvious duty, thank him for the favour. Our Meditation has been an audience with the Almighty; conse-

quently, we should not retire without thanking Him for His gracious condescension, and the graces and favours He has bountifully bestowed upon us; for, as a good and merciful Father, He is always true to His promise: "*All things whatsoever, you shall ask in prayer, believing, you shall receive.*" (*Matt.* xxi. 22).

Secondly, we should beg His pardon for our distractions, or any faults we may have committed in our Meditation, in the same way as we would apologize to any person high in dignity, if, whilst in audience with him, we allowed ourselves to be betrayed into any conduct or manner unbecoming the occasion.

Thirdly, we renew all the good assurances we made to God in the way of pious *affections*, or holy *resolutions*, during our Meditation. This we do in a summary way, as a pledge of our fidelity in the fulfilment of them.

Fourthly, conscious of our own insufficiency, we end by asking the grace we require to carry out our good purposes, and give a practical effect to our Meditation in the conduct of our lives, especially during the day we are entering upon, under the Divine auspices.

St. Francis of Sales recommends us to lay up in our mind some pious sentiment to remind us during the day of our Meditation, by taking with us some text of Scripture, or pious expression, which, from time to time, we would repeat for that purpose. He calls it a "Spiritual Bouquet," because as a bouquet, that we would pluck in a garden, renews the fragrance of the garden as often as we feel its smell, so the "Spiritual Bouquet" we would take with us from Meditation, would preserve the effects of the Meditation, according to the words of the Canticle: "*A bundle of myrrh is my beloved to me, he shall abide between my breasts.*" (*Cant.* i. 12).

Conclusion.

Conclude by a fervent exhortation to the practice of meditation, using for the purpose the motives above set forth.

Consult "Exercises of St. Ignatius," and Preface to St. Liguori's "Preparation for Death."

N.B.—In treating this subject, it would be well to take some example, and handle it in a manner as if actually making a meditation on it, dividing it into the several parts, and eliciting the various acts belonging to each part. It would be especially desirable in mentioning the affections in the order in which they are set down, to return upon them, and explain them one after another, showing at the same time, by an example, how each is performed.

PART IV.

ON THE SACRAMENTS.

SPECIAL PREFACE

TO

PART IV.

In using the following Programmes respecting the Sacraments, the Preacher, or Instructor, should pay particular attention to the following points, in order to explain them clearly to the people, viz.: 1st, the end or purpose of each Sacrament, according to the intentions of our Divine Lord in its institution; 2ndly, its matter and form; 3rdly, the ceremonies accompanying its administration; 4thly, the minister; and 5thly, the dispositions for its worthy reception, interspersing, as he goes along, sentiments of piety with his explanations.

In explaining the end or purpose of each Sacrament, and showing the particular spiritual want or necessity to which it responds, he will be afforded an opportunity of extolling the goodness, mercy, and wisdom of God in the institution of a remedy and help so beneficent and salutary, pointing out how the Sacrament affords us access to the merits of the Passion and Death of our good and merciful Saviour, and enables us to realize the words of the prophet, "*You shall draw waters with joy out of the Saviour's fountains*" (*Isai.* xii. 3); these waters which, as our Divine Lord says, "*spring up into life everlasting.*" (*John* iv. 14).

In treating of the "matter and form," he will show how both combine, and indicate the special grace or effect of the Sacrament. In doing so he will point out how our Faith is called into action, in order to pass from the visible, external sign, to the invisible and internal operation of the Sacrament on the soul, appealing to the words of St. Paul, as he says: "*Faith is the substance of things to be hoped for, the evidence of things that appear not.*" (*Heb.* xi. 1).

The Church has always attached the highest importance to the ceremonies she employs in her public worship and the administration of the Sacraments. By them she speaks to our eyes for our instruction and edification. They impart a solemn dignity, and a mysterious majesty to the functions of her ministry. They symbolize and explain their latent virtue and spiritual efficacy. They stir up faith and devotion, and by their uniformity throughout the universal Church, they maintain a bond of unity, and cause the "*domestics of the Faith*" to feel at home wheresoever they go, as they enter the abodes, magnificent or humble, of Catholic worship, or witness her sacred mysteries, administered in public or in private.

For these reasons the Church has ever used the utmost rigour against any attempt to interfere with her sacred ceremonies. The Council of Trent, taking account of the matter in its seventh session, enacted as follows: "If any one shall say that the received and approved rites of the Catholic Church, accustomed to be employed in the solemn administration of the Sacraments, may be, without sin, omitted at will by her ministers, or be changed into other new rites by any Pastor whomsoever of the Church, be he Anathema." And, in the twenty second session, it adopted the following Canon with respect to the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass: "If any one shall say that the ceremonies, vestments, and external symbols, which the Church uses in the celebration of Mass, are unmeaning observances of impiety, rather than observances of piety, be he Anathema."

It is unnecessary to observe, that to have their due effect, and to realize the great results contemplated by liturgical and ritual ceremonies, they must be explained to the faithful. It is on this account that the Sacred Council directs in the seventh chapter of the twenty-fourth session (*de Reformatione*) as follows: "In order that the faithful people approach with greater reverence and devotion of mind to receive the Sacraments, the Sacred Synod orders all Bishops that, not only when they are to be administered by themselves to the people, they

would explain their virtue and use, according to the capacity of those receiving them; but also to take care that the same be done by all Parish Priests, piously and discreetly . . . in accordance with the form to be prescribed by the Sacred Synod in a Catechism for the various Sacraments."

How the august assembly of the Prelates of God's Church saw in these enactments the wants and wishes of the faithful, is found by experience in the pious gratification they feel when they hear any of the ceremonies of the Mass or Sacraments explained to them.

Instruction on the Sacraments requires, as a matter of course, that it be pointed out who is the duly authorised minister in each case. This will afford an occasion of distinguishing between the powers of orders and jurisdiction, which it is highly interesting for the faithful to understand, both in reference to the ministry of the Catholic Church, and also of heretical and schismatical sects, in which, even passing over the question of orders, their ministry is fruitless in all that regards jurisdiction. Also, with respect to the Sacrament of Baptism, it is of supreme importance to inform the faithful how it is to be administered by any one in case of necessity. They generally understand the doctrine on the point, but they require to be instructed as to the manner in which it is to be carried out.

As to the dispositions required on the part of the faithful for the worthy and profitable reception of the Sacraments, "The Dispensers of the Mysteries of God" must always be mindful of the great maxim, "that holy things are to be handled in a holy manner," and with fear and trembling take our dear Lord's warning: "*Give not that which is holy to dogs; neither cast ye your pearls before swine.*" (*Matt.* vii. 6). They should, therefore, be unceasing in keeping before the minds of their people the dispositions required on their part to receive worthily the Sacraments, so as to derive, through these Divine Institutions, the merits of our Saviour's Passion and Death.

As to the style to be observed, it should be simple, in the most simple form and degree, but the language should be

chosen with the greatest exactness on this very account, to avoid mistakes in the minds of the simple faithful. The preacher will find abundant sources in his Theology and the Catechism of the Council of Trent, and if we point out any others, it will be to afford a greater variety of choice.

He should take frequent occasion to introduce words of pious sentimentality, in order duly to season his explanations with a religious savour, as otherwise they would be too dry and insipid; and, when speaking of the dispositions required, he will find himself called upon to use all the force and energy of the sermon style.

THE

SACRAMENTS IN GENERAL.

"*I am come that they may have life, and may have it more abundantly.*"—JOHN x. 10.

INTRODUCTION.

Observe, how man is composed of two substances: one spiritual, his soul; the other material or corporeal, his body. Each of these substances has a life of its own, and God in His wisdom and goodness has provided various means and helps for maintaining the life of each. Amongst the means and helps which He has provided for the soul, the most precious beyond comparison are those which we receive from the Sacraments. It is, therefore, of the greatest importance for the Christian to be well instructed in what the Church teaches respecting the Sacraments, that we may avail ourselves the more plentifully of God's bounty and goodness in those institutions for the maintenance of the life and health of our immortal souls. Before commencing to speak of the different Sacraments in particular, it will be highly useful to treat of some points that relate to them all in general. These points are to be the subject of this instruction.

[Invite attention, and make a short invocation.]

BODY OF THE SUBJECT.

Definition of a Sacrament, with a brief explanation of the terms, distinguishing matter and form, when explaining "an outward sign," after which **proceed** *with the following points.*

1. The first idea that we have of a Sacrament is, that it is a channel for conveying the grace of God to our souls. Here observe that Divine grace is, at the same time, the life of the soul, and the means of preserving that life, and that the Sacraments are so many channels for conveying this life and these means of life to our souls. **Illustration** from a city supplied by pipes with water from a reservoir. **Apply** comparison, observing that the merits of our Saviour are the inexhaustible source, whence the Sacraments derive the grace, which they pour in upon our souls, according to *Isaias* xii. 3: "*You shall draw waters with joy out of the Saviour's fountains.*"

2. Instituted by our Divine Lord Himself, and so far above and beyond the invention or institution of the Church, that she cannot add to their number, or lessen it, or modify them in what relates to their substance or essence

3. That they are seven in number, namely (**here name them and add**): that it is an article of our faith, that they are not more nor less than seven. (Quote Council of Trent, sess. vii. can. 1.) Observe, that in their design and effects, they correspond with the seven wants of our spiritual life, like to those of our material or corporeal life. **Show this with respect to each.** 1st. As to Baptism, it is a second birth, according to our Saviour's words: "*Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.*" (*John* iii. 5). 2ndly, Confirmation; when born we require to grow up and be fortified for the difficulties and battles of life, because "*the life of man upon earth,*" according to Holy Job, "*is a warfare*" (vii. 1). 3rdly, We further require nourishment; hence, the Blessed Eucharist: "*My flesh is meat indeed; and My blood is drink indeed.*" (*John* vi. 56). 4thly, Medicine and cure of our spiritual diseases; hence Penance. 5thly, Protection in our last struggle; hence Extreme Unction. 6thly, To provide a ministry to administer these various helps; hence Holy Orders. 7thly, To raise the union of the husband and wife to a figure of the union of our Divine Lord with His Church; hence Matrimony. (*Ephes.* v.)

4. Unless we place an obstacle in their way, like stopping up a water-course, they will infallibly produce the effects they are instituted for. **Here explain** the difference of "*ex opere operato*," and "*ex opere operantis*," and **apply it. Explain** also, that it is Christ who is the chief agent in the Sacraments for their effects. (See Breviary, Octave of Epiphany, viii. and ix. lessons.)

5. That these effects are the infusion of grace into our souls, and for some of them, the imprinting of a character. **Explain** as to the graces, they are two-fold. 1st, special graces attached to them respectively, and are different in each (**show this**). 2ndly, an increase of habitual grace, when the soul is in a state of grace already. As to the character, **explain** what it is, and that it never can be effaced here or hereafter, and that the Sacraments that impress it, cannot be received more than once. **Mention** the Sacraments, viz., Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Orders.

6. Some of the Sacraments are "of the dead," namely, Baptism and Penance; the rest are "of the living." **Explain.**

7. *Ceremonies.* What? Reason of them. See Catechism of the Council of Trent.

8. *Considerations*, showing the bounty of God in the institution of the Sacraments. 1st. These fountains of grace accessible to the poor, as well as to the rich: "*All you that thirst, come to the waters;*

and you that have no money, make haste, buy and eat." (*Isai.* lv. 1). 2ndly, they are ever flowing like the widow's oil vessel (4 *Kings* iv.) Relate passage. 3rdly, they are placed in things always at hand, such as water, oil, bread and wine. Here refer to, and quote the Secret of the Mass of Feria 5a. post Dominicam Passionis. 4thly, a ministry is maintained in constant succession everywhere to wait on the faithful in their spiritual wants, to administer these Sacraments; and this ministry is propagated not by human generation, or inheritance, as in the Old Law, but by vocation, our Saviour saying: "*You have not chosen Me but I have chosen you, and have appointed you, that you should go, and bring forth fruit, and your fruit should remain.*" (*John* xv. 16).

Conclusion.

Exhort to admiration and praise of the Divine mercy and goodness, to an appreciation of these holy institutions, the treasury of God's graces, to enable us to merit heaven.

Consult Catechism of the Council of Trent; Theology "*De Sac. in gen.;*" Bishop Hay's "Sincere Christian," on Sacrament of Penance; "Journal of Meditations," Thursday, 4th week after Easter.

BAPTISM.

"*Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.*"—John iii. 5.

Introduction.

These words are taken from the conversation of our Divine Lord with Nicodemus. (**Recite** the conversation as far as verse 7), and **proceed to say**, that so it was, that our Divine Lord revealed to mankind the second birth to be undergone in order to become children of the Church, and so become the sons of God, being born in this second birth, "*not of blood, nor of the will of man, but of God.*" (*John* i. 13).

[**Announce** the subject, **bespeak** attention, and **invoke** a blessing.]

Body of the Subject.

1. Define Baptism, and point out its end; explain the doctrine of original sin, and observe that Baptism is the gate of the other sacraments, so that if a person come to the use of reason without being baptized, and having added actual to original sin, he is to find a remedy for both in the Sacrament of Baptism.

2 Explain the doctrine of matter and form, as also of ordinary minister, how the Sacrament is administered, and the character imparted, in consequence of which it can only be received once.

3. Speak of sponsors, their obligations, and the matrimonial impediment they contract in reference to the person baptized, and the parents.

4. Speak also of *private* Baptism, and explain how, on account of the necessity of the Sacrament, any one, man or woman, can confer it, using the proper matter and form. A word to urge the importance of every one knowing how to administer *private* Baptism, but especially midwives.

5. Baptismal engagements, enlarge on their obligation, and suggest a short form to be renewed from time to time.

Conclusion.

Conclude with some reflections on the happiness of being born of Catholic parents, and God's goodness to us on our entrance into the world, quoting *Ps.* lxx. 6, and cxxxviii. 13, and exhort to a strict observance of Baptismal engagements.

Consult "Theology" on the subject; "Roman Ritual," "Catechism of the Council of Trent;" Guillet's "Projets d'Instructions," xc., xci. Insts.; Bishop Hay's "Sincere Christian," vol. 1, ch. xx.; "Anecdotes Scaramelli," vol. iv., 15, and iii. 234.

Short Form of Renewal of Baptismal Vows.

O my God! how I am indebted to Thee for the grace of Baptism, and the many graces contained therein. But, my God! I must remember, that in Baptism certain vows were offered to Thee on my behalf. Oh! that I kept these sacred engagements. Alas! I have violated them, and I confess in Thy holy presence, I have violated them frequently and grievously. But, my God! Thou willest not the death of the sinner, but that he be converted and live. I therefore throw myself once more on Thy mercy, and offer myself anew to Thy Divine Majesty; to renew the vows of my Baptism in presence of the Blessed Virgin and the whole court of heaven. Yes, my God! let me say to Thee, that, as I renounced the devil in my Baptism, so I renounce him again

now, and for ever; and, as then I also renounced his works and pomps, so do I renounce them once again; and as I declared at the sacred font, that I should adhere to Thee inviolably, so do I renew the same declaration at present, promising as then to observe Thy holy commandments as contained in the double precept of loving Thee with my whole heart and soul, with my whole mind, and with all my strength, and my neighbour as myself, for the love of Thee. Accept this renewal, O my God! of my baptismal vows, and grant me the grace to persevere in the faithful observance of them to my last breath; and do thou, O Mary Immaculate, and thou my angel guardian, as also my patron saint, and all ye angels and saints of heaven, intercede for me, and obtain for me the gift of final perseverance in these sacred engagements, which I offer anew this day to Him, Whom I wish to be henceforth the God of my heart and my portion for ever. Amen, amen, amen.

CONFIRMATION.

'*Now he that confirmeth us with you in Christ, and that hath anointed us, is God: Who also hath sealed us, and given the pledge of the Spirit in our hearts.*"—2 Cor. i. 21, 22.

Introduction.

Refer to instruction on Baptism, and observe, that it will be in order to treat of Confirmation, &c.

[Engage attention, and invoke a blessing.]

Body of the Subject.

1. *Definition.* Define it in the words of the Catechism. Enlarge upon the end and purpose of its institution. Inculcate its importance on that account, and state by whom administered.

2. *The matter* employed, the *form* or *words used* in applying it, and *the ceremonies* before and after, &c.

3. *Its gifts.* Explain what they are in general, and the particular end of each in refereuce to opposite miseries on our part.

4. *Sponsors:* the matrimonial impediments contracted. *The obligations* it imposes (quote *Matt.* x. 28).

5. *Obligation* of receiving it, and the dispositions required. It is a Sacrament of the living. It imprints a character, and therefore can be received only once.

Conclusion.

A few words on the goodness of God in this Sacrament.

Consult Theology on the Sacrament of Confirmation; also the Council of Trent, and Catechism of the Council; also Guillet's "Projets d'Instructions," xcii. & xciii. Insts.; and Bishop Hay's "Sincere Christian," vol. 1, chap. xxi.

THE BLESSED EUCHARIST.

FIRST INSTRUCTION:

DOCTRINE OF THE REAL PRESENCE.

"*He that eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood, abideth in Me, and I in him.*"—John vi. 57.

Introduction.

Some general observations, to impress the audience with the sacredness of the mystery, ending with an invocation.

Body of the Subject.

1. Historic account of the mystery, setting forth words of promise in the sixth chapter of St. John, and their fulfilment in the institution, in which point out two things especially: 1st, That Christ changed the bread and wine into His Body and Blood; 2ndly, That in saying, "*Do this in commemoration of Me*" (*Luke* xxii. 19), He gave the Apostles and their successors, *i.e.*, all Bishops and Priests to the end of time, power of doing the same, and which is done by the celebration of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

2. Explain and apply this, by showing how the Priest at the Altar does what Christ did at the Last Supper, taking bread, and a chalice

with wine in it, into his hands, as Christ did, using the words He used, and using them in His Sacred Person, as His representative and minister, and afterwards distributing the Communion as He did.

3. Explain the change, showing from its nature why the Church calls it Transubstantiation (explain negatively and positively); and observe, that whilst the change takes place in the substance of the bread and wine, no change takes place in the appearances, whence the Blessed Eucharist is properly said to be the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ under the appearances of bread and wine.

4. Explain why it is, that whilst our Divine Lord says nothing of His Soul or His Divinity, still we teach, that we have not only His Body and Blood, but His Soul and Divinity likewise; whence we believe that in the Blessed Eucharist we have our Divine Lord really present, the same God-man that was born in the stable of Bethlehem, the same, &c.

5. Explain that Christ in consecrating the bread says only, "*This is My Body*," and in consecrating the wine says only, "*This is My Blood*," nevertheless, we are to believe, that under the form of bread alone, we have His Sacred Blood present also, as well as His Adorable Body, and under the form of wine alone, we have present also His Adorable Body together with His Adorable Blood, and infer that the faithful, who receive the Holy Communion under the form of bread *alone*, receive substantially not only the Body but also the Blood, and with Body and Blood, the Soul and Divinity of our Divine Lord equally, as if, like the Priest, they were to communicate under both forms.

6. Explain that our Divine Lord is present everywhere, where the Blessed Eucharist is celebrated and reserved, so that, if there were five thousand masses going on at the same time, He is present on each Altar at the time, and in every Tabernacle in each and every one of the consecrated Particles in every Ciborium, throughout the world.

7. Explain that our Divine Lord is present whole and entire, not only in the entire Host, but in every particle of it, and not only in the entire contents of the Chalice, but in every drop thereof, so that if the Host, or Chalice, be divided into any number of parts, our Divine Lord is equally present, whole and entire, in each part after the division, as He was in the whole Host and whole Chalice before the division had taken place.

Apply the usual comparison of the mirror, sound, &c., and infer that if a priest going to give Communion to any number of persons, and not having Sacred Particles enough for all, he can divide them, in order that all may communicate. Show this from the example of the Last Supper itself.

8. Explain that in the Blessed Eucharist the other two Persons of the Most Holy Trinity, the Father and the Holy Ghost, are present

likewise, not only by that general presence of their being everywhere by their immensity, but by that special presence called "*Circumincession*," by which the three Divine Persons are one and the same God, possessing the one same and undivided and indivisible essence, or nature, according to the words, "*If any one love Me*," *&c.* (*John* xiv. 23 ; also 1 *John* v. 7 ; *John* x. 30 ; *John* xiv. 10).

9. Explain that the ends for which our Divine Lord instituted the Blessed Sacrament were, 1st, to be a Sacrifice ; 2ndly, to be a Sacrament; 3rdly, to be a means, or mode of His perpetual presence amongst the faithful of His Church, according to the words, "*My delight is to be amongst the children of men*" (*Prov.* viii. 31), and "*Behold, I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world.*" (*Matt.* xxviii. 20).

10. Observe how these several points are so many mysteries included in the ineffable Mystery of the Blessed Eucharist, which we accept on the authority of the words of our Saviour Himself, that our not comprehending them would no more lessen our belief in them, that in the mystery of the Cross, which "*is a stumbling-block to the Jews and foolishness unto the Gentiles ; but unto them that are called, the power of God, and the wisdom of God.*" (1 *Cor.* i. 23, 24). "*O the depth of the riches of the wisdom and of the knowledge of God*," *&c.* (*Rom.* xi. 33).

Conclusion.

Conclude by exhorting the audience to praise and bless God for His goodness, mercy, and love in this most holy Mystery.

Consult Catechism of Council of Trent, also Rodriguez, "Christian Perfection," vol. 2, Treatise 8, chap. xii., and Bishop Hay's "Sincere Christian," vol. 2, chap. i., and Guillet, xciv. Inst.

THE BLESSED EUCHARIST.

SECOND INSTRUCTION:

THE BLESSED EUCHARIST AS A SACRIFICE

"*Do this in commemoration of Me.*"—Luke xxii. 19.

Introduction.

Recapitulate briefly, but distinctly, the points of previous instruction, and announce present subject, stating it to be one of the chief ends of the Mystery of the Blessed Eucharist, and invoke a blessing.

Body of the Subject.

1. That God is to be honoured as Creator and Sovereign Lord of all things. That, consequently, from the beginning of the world mankind honoured God as such, by some offering that was destroyed or otherwise changed in His sight, testifying thereby His power and dominion over all creatures to destroy them, or otherwise change them, at will.

2. That this offering was called sacrifice. Define sacrifice, and say: that it is due to God alone, and that being commanded by the voice of Nature itself it was offered in one form or other, in every nation of the earth from the beginning of the world.

That amongst the people of God special sacrifices, as regulated by the Old Law, were presented to Him; that they were very numerous as to the things offered, but that they were offered only for four chief ends, viz., adoration, thanksgiving, propitiation and impetration, the three latter ends growing out of the first, which presents the primary and most essential end of sacrifice.

3. That these sacrifices of the Old Law were in themselves of little value, and were pleasing to God only by their reference beforehand to the sacrifice our Divine Saviour was one day to offer of Himself. Here quote *Galat.* iv. 9; *Heb.* x. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14; after *which state and show* how He accomplished all this by dying on the cross.

4. That, however, before offering Himself a sacrifice on the cross, He offered Himself as a sacrifice at the Last Supper. Here show the Last Supper to have been a sacrifice, after which proceed to show how, by the words, "*Do this in commemoration of Me*," He gave the Apostles the power of performing the same sacrifice, and through them to the Bishops and Priests of the Church for ever, and that this power they exercise in celebrating the Sacrifice of the Mass. Here show how the Priest, in celebrating Mass, pursues the example of our Divine Lord, at the Last Supper, taking bread and wine to the altar, pronouncing over them the words used by our Divine Lord, and speaking in the person of our Divine Lord Himself, by His appointment in the words, "*Do this*," &c., whereby the Priest is identified in his ministry at the altar with our Divine Lord Himself, the Priesthood of one being the Priesthood of the other, whereby there is but one Priesthood in the New Law, our Blessed Lord being represented in the Priests of the Church, and thereby a Priest for ever, according to the order of Melchisedech, different from the Priests of the Old Law, who were so many different priests. (*Heb.* vii. 23, &c., and Council of Trent, sess. xxii., chap. i.)

5. Having thus shown that the Sacrifice of the Mass takes its origin from the Sacrifice of the Last Supper, and is the same with

it, proceed to show both to be identical substantially with the Sacrifice of the Cross, the Victim being the same, and the Chief Offerer, or Priest, being the same. Infer, therefore, that the true idea we are to have of the Sacrifice of the Mass is, that during its celebration our Divine Lord descends upon the altar; that He there presents Himself in sacrifice to His Eternal Father, and that He offers Himself thus in union with the Sacrifice of the Cross for the four great ends of sacrifice, adoration, thanksgiving, propitiation, and impetration. Quote ii. cap., Book iv. of the "Imitation of Christ," last verse. Explain, that whilst due to God *alone*, Masses are nevertheless celebrated in honour, and in memory of the saints, as explained by the Council of Trent, sess. xxii. chap. iii.

Infer, therefore, how the Sacrifice of the Mass renders infinite honour to God, and that one single Mass is more acceptable to Him than all the acts of religion presented to Him by all His creatures in heaven and on earth for all eternity. Show how by the Sacrifice of the Mass the Prophecy of Malachias (i. 11) is fulfilled.

6. Explain that the Sacrifice of the Mass is performed by the separate consecration of the bread first, and then of the wine, in order to represent thereby, as our Divine Lord did at His Last Supper, the separation of soul and body by His death on the cross.

Conclusion.

Conclude with words of admiration, thanksgiving, &c., and exhort the faithful to esteem this mystery of love, in which our Divine Saviour places Himself between us and His Eternal Father, to discharge for us our obligations of adoration, thanksgiving, propitiation, and impetration.

Consult Theology, *De Sacrificio Missæ*: Council of Trent, and, Catechism of Council; Bishop Hay's "Sincere Christian," vol. 2, chap. xxiii., and Guillet's "Projets d'Instructions," xcv., xcvi. Insts. Bishop Hay's, "Pious Christian," chap. iii. Read also the first few chapters of the fourth Book of the "Imitation of Christ" for sentimental expressions, to be interspersed with the didactic explanations as you go along; anecdotes from Scaramelli, vol. iii., Nos. 163, 164.

THE BLESSED EUCHARIST.

THIRD INSTRUCTION:
CEREMONIES OF THE MASS.

"*What other nation is there so renowned that hath ceremonies, and just judgments, and all the law, which I will set forth this day before your eyes?*"—DEUT. iv. 8.

INTRODUCTION.

So spoke Moses respecting the ceremonies of the Old Law The New Law has its ceremonies too for the public worship of God, especially for the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass; and it is the desire of the Church that the faithful be made acquainted with these ceremonies, in order that they may assist with greater devotion at the celebration of that most august mystery, and derive greater benefit from it.

Hence it cannot but be interesting in the highest degree, and most instructive, to make a review of these sacred ceremonies, after having considered what the Holy Sacrifice is substantially and in itself.

[Invite attention, adding an invocation.]

BODY OF THE SUBJECT.

1. The Sacrifice of the Mass having taken its commencement, as we have seen, from the Sacrifice of the Last Supper, and being the same with it, and both being the same with the Sacrifice of the Cross, it was only natural that the Church should, in the ceremonies of the Mass, have in view both the Last Supper and the Cross, in order to bring before the minds of the faithful, as they assist at Mass, these two great Sacrifices. Hence, we will see, as we go along, how the various ceremonies of the Mass carry out the design of the Church. We will begin with the Altar.

2. The *Altar* represents Calvary itself, and is erected on a platform above the level of the Church, as Calvary was elevated, and formed a mount or hill above the ground about it. 2ndly, It is surmounted by a crucifix, in order to bring to mind more strikingly the mysterious connection between it and the Altar of

the Cross. It is also surmounted with lighted candles, to remind us that the victim to be offered is Christ our Lord, who is "*the Light of the world*, and burns with love for mankind in this holy Oblation, as He did when He was dying on the cross. 3rdly, On the Altar there is usually a tabernacle, in which our Divine Lord permanently abides amongst us, according to His own most endearing words: "*I am with you all days even to the consummation of the world.*" 4thly, The Altar is covered with three white linen cloths, to signify that the Victim to be offered upon it is *thrice holy*, according to the canticle sung unceasingly before the throne in heaven. 5thly, Over these three white linen cloths is placed another small white linen cloth, on which the Divine Victim is immediately to repose during the Oblation. This brings to mind the clean linen cloth, in which the pious Joseph of Arimathea wrapped up the body of our Divine Lord, when it was taken down from the cross.

N.B.—Recommend the faithful, when they have time before Mass, to fix their eyes on the Altar, and turn these things over in their minds.

3. *The Vestments.* As the Priest represents Christ in the Holy Sacrifice, the vestments which he wears are designed to carry out this representation. Hence, &c. Here explain the symbolic meaning of each vestment, showing how they recall the various stages of the Passion, and add, that the Priest puts on the vestments standing before a crucifix, in order to remind himself that he is going to offer the same Sacrifice substantially as the Sacrifice of Calvary, and having vested himself, he bows profoundly to the same crucifix, that he may come to the Altar with this thought deeply impressed on his soul. Infer, therefore, that as the Priest appears coming to the Altar, the faithful should call to mind Christ coming to offer Himself on Calvary. Quote "Imitation of Christ," Book iv. chap. v., "A Priest clothed in the sacred vestments," &c., towards the end of chapter.

4. The Priest begins Mass at the foot of the Altar, and at some distance from it, representing thereby Christ in His agony in the garden, and suffering for our sins. The faithful ought to unite their sorrow with His agony in reciting the "*Confiteor.*"

The ascent of the Priest to the altar recalls our Saviour ascending from the garden to Jerusalem, led captive by the Jews; and the various changes of position which the Priest makes are made to represent the various painful journeys of our

Blessed Lord, as He was dragged from tribunal to tribunal, from Annas to Caiphas, &c.

The turning of the Priest to the people, in the early stages of the Mass, to say, *Dominus Vobiscum*, and *Orate Fratres*, should remind us of our Saviour turning to St. Peter, and looking at him after denying Him; His turning to the women of Jerusalem to say to them, "*Daughters of Jerusalem*," &c. (*Luke* xxiii. 28); His turning to the penitent thief, and saying: "*This day thou shalt be with Me in paradise;*" and His looking down from the cross on His Blessed Mother and St. John, to say to them, "*Woman*," &c. (*John* xix. 26); and at the end, the *Dominus Vobiscum*, the *Ite Missa est*, and final blessing, recall the apparitions of our Lord after His Resurrection, His salutations on these occasions, and His final benediction before His ascension.

5. The various signs of the cross made by the Priest, sometimes once, sometimes three times, sometimes five times, are to remind us constantly, that the mystery we assist at, is the same as the Mystery of the Cross, and to recall the three hours' agony on that ignominious gibbet, and His five bleeding wounds, the fountains of our salvation.

6. The different voices, sometimes higher, sometimes lower, sometimes in secret, used at different times by the Priest, are to remind us of the different voices of our Divine Lord during His Passion, according as He spoke to the Jews, His Blessed Mother, and disciples, and in silence to His Eternal Father.

7. The Priest extending his hands, and again joining them at different times, reminds us of our Blessed Lord hanging on the cross with His hands outstretched, as if to receive mankind into the embraces of His charity and love, and offer them to the Eternal Father, with the price of His Passion and Death, for their ransom. We should feel, at the moment, as if rushing into His embraces, to say with St. Paul: "*With Christ I am nailed to the cross.*" (*Galat.* ii. 19).

8. The Offertory, or offering of the bread and wine at the Offertory recalls the Last Supper, when our Saviour, as St. Paul relates the great fact, "*took bread*," &c. (1 *Cor.* xi. 24, 25, 26, **which quote**).

9. The various inclinations of the Priest remind us of the resignation and perfect good will with which our dear Lord suffered for us, according to the words of the prophet, "*He was offered because it was His own will*," &c. (*Isaias* liii. 7).

10. The Priest washing his hands should bring before our minds Pilate washing his hands, when he sentenced our Saviour to death, saying: "*I am innocent of the blood, &c.*, and the people cried out, "*His blood be upon us and upon our children.*" (*Matt.* xxvii. 24, 25).

11. The Elevation represents our Divine Redeemer nailed to the cross, and elevated upon it. The separate elevation of Host and Chalice represents the separation of the Soul from the Body by His death. The *Pater Noster* recalls the seven last words. The breaking of the Host, and dropping part of it into the Chalice, call to mind the descent of the Soul of our Saviour into Limbo; the Communion of the Priest, the burial of our Divine Lord; the Post Communion, His Resurrection; the last Gospel, His triumph over death and His glorious reign in heaven, whence He governs the Church, having made His enemies His footstool.

Conclusion.

End by saying, that as we should have the thought going to Mass, that we are going to assist at the same Sacrifice as the Sacrifice of the Cross, and as we should keep this thought in our minds during the whole time, so should we come away in the sentiments we should have, if we were assisting at the Sacrifice of Calvary.

N.B.—The object of this instruction being to bring out the analogies of the Sacrifice of the Mass with the Sacrifice of the Last Supper, and that of the Cross, several ceremonies and explanations are omitted, which do not bear on this view. Intersperse as you go along expressions of gratitude, love, &c.

Consult Cardinal Bona, "De Sacrificio Missae."

THE BLESSED EUCHARIST.

FOURTH INSTRUCTION:
MANNER OF ASSISTING AT MASS.

"*Where there are two or three gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them.*"—MATT. xviii. 20.

INTRODUCTION.

Recapitulate the principal points of preceding instruction, especially that the Blessed Eucharist was instituted to be a sacrifice, a sacrifice of adoration, a sacrifice of thanksgiving, a sacrifice of propitiation, and a sacrifice of impetration, answering to the four great ends of sacrifice, and that our Divine Saviour is present amongst us for these ends, when we come together to assist at Mass, agreeably to the words of the text, "*Where there are two or three,*" *&c.*

[Announce this and bespeak attention, adding an invocation.]

BODY OF THE SUBJECT.

1. We are to recollect, that coming to Mass we are coming not merely to recite prayers, but to assist at sacrifice, the highest and most solemn act of religious worship, and due to God alone.

2ndly. That the sacrifice, at which we are going to assist is substantially the same as the Sacrifice of the Cross.

3rdly. That, therefore, we should join our intention with the intention of the Priest, and still more with that of our Divine Saviour Himself in presenting Himself on the altar to His Eternal Father, for the four great ends of sacrifice; and that we should approach the church as if we were ascending the Hill of Calvary to be present at our Divine Lord's crucifixion.

2. Observe, the manner of assisting at Mass must be different for three different classes of persons; 1st, those who cannot read; 2ndly, those who can read, and desire to use their prayer-book; and 3rdly, those who can read, but wish to dispense with their prayer-book, preferring to entertain themselves in meditation during the time.

Those who cannot read, are to penetrate their souls with the thought that our Divine Lord is before them on the altar after

the Consecration. That He offers Himself then to His Eternal Father, as He did on the Cross of Calvary, and that they are to unite their intentions, in assisting at Mass, with His intention in the offering which He makes of Himself, whilst Mass is being celebrated. It would be well, if they had a little crucifix in hand, to look at it, from time to time, or cast their eyes on the crucifix on the altar, in order to keep constantly before their minds the Mysteries of Calvary, and whilst penetrated with these thoughts they may recite the Lord's Prayer and Hail Mary, or they may say, "*God be merciful to me a sinner.*"

Here you may recite the following anecdote from the life of St. Ignatius.

When on a journey with some of his companions, and employing a porter to carry their luggage, as they came to a hotel, they knelt down to say some prayers. The porter, imitating the good example, did the same. But some person having asked him what payers he said, he replied: "O God, these men are saints, and I a sinner. I know not how to pray, but I wish to say what they say, and ask what they ask." **Apply.**

Also relate the story of a lay brother, who did not know how to read, and was observed to be very pious during Mass. Having been asked how he employed himself during the time, he said: "I only know three letters, the first *black*, the second *red*, the third *white*. From the beginning of the Mass to the Offertory I look at the first letter, that is, I reflect on my sins. From the Offertory until the Priest's Communion, I look at the red letter, that is, I think on the death of my Divine Saviour, and the Blood He shed for my salvation. And for the remainder, I look at the white letter, making a spiritual Communion as the Priest communicates, and unite myself with my Saviour to the end of the Mass." **Apply.**

As to those who can read, and wish to use their prayer-book, they have only to read the prayers of Mass, accompanying the Priest, as he goes on through the different stages of the Adorable Sacrifice, and recollecting as well as they can, the corresponding parts of the Passion. But they must not read with their eyes merely, &c.

In reference to the third class (**name them**): they are to place before their minds the four great ends of sacrifice (**name them**); and unite their intention with that of the Priest, and our Divine Lord for these four ends, keeping before their minds that the Mass is the same sacrifice as the Sacrifice of the Cross. Having

done this, they will accompany the Priest, meditating as he goes along, on the various stages of the Passion, corresponding with the divisions of the Mass.

Whatever way we are to assist at Mass, we are to do so with all possible devotion, especially from the Consecration to the Priest's Communion, and if we do not go to Communion sacramentally, we are to make a spiritual Communion (**explain.**) Finally, we should go away from Mass, as we would come away from Calvary.

3. *Some words of instruction for persons who cannot assist at Mass, owing to sickness or some other lawful impediment.*

1st. **Observe**, they may, and ought to, assist spiritually, that is, in thought and desire. (**Explain.**)

2ndly. For this purpose they would do well to kneel down before a crucifix, or a picture of the crucifixion, and recollect that the Mass is the same sacrifice as the Sacrifice of the Cross, and then join in wish and desire with the congregation of the parish, as they assist at the Holy Sacrifice.

3rdly. Having in this way regulated their mind and formed their intention, they are to read the prayers at Mass, just as if they were at the parish church at the time, and if there be two or three at home, who cannot go to Mass, it would be all the better, if they would unite. By this means a person who is sick, can be helped by a person who is well, and a person who cannot read by a person who can. However, if a person who cannot read has no person to assist him, let him do the best he can for himself, in the same way as he does when actually at Mass.

Observe how important it is, when a person cannot go to Mass, that he would try to assist at it spiritually, as he would thereby have the merit of his good desires, and would, moreover, prevent himself from becoming careless about the obligation, when he could actually attend.

Relate *the following anecdote* :—

A Bishop in the United States of America, on a pastoral tour through his diocese, fell in with a number of Irishmen in a remote part of the country, where they had neither Church nor Priest. In this state of spiritual privation they used to come together, on Sunday, at an appointed time, and kneeling down most devoutly, they had the prayers of Mass recited for them by a venerable old man in true patriarchal style, whilst in their desires and intentions they sought to unite themselves with their

Christian brethren throughout the Church in assisting at the Adorable Sacrifice. The Bishop, affected alike by their piety and destitution, sent them a Priest, which caused the poor people to feel, as if heaven, having mercy upon them, had sent their Saviour amongst them in the person of the Priest, His representative, according to the words of St. Paul, "*For Christ therefore we are ambassadors, God as it were exhorting by us.* (2 *Cor.* v. 20).

Conclusion

(Some words of exhortation in conclusion conformable to the subject.

Consult Rodriguez, "Christian Perfection," vol. 2. 8th Treatise, chap. xv.; Bishop Hay's "Pious Christian," chap. iii.; Guillet. "Projets d'Instructions," xcvii. Inst. Scaramelli, "Anecdotes," vol ii. 189–207.

THE BLESSED EUCHARIST.

FIFTH INSTRUCTION.

THE BLESSED EUCHARIST AS A SACRAMENT; ITS EFFECTS; AND DISPOSITIONS FOR WORTHILY RECEIVING IT.

"*He that eateth Me, the same also shall live by Me.*"—John vi. 58.

Introduction.

Reference to preceding subject, and announcement of present, with exhortation, to attention, &c. Invoke a blessing in the hope of realizing the great blessing promised in your text—"*He that eateth Me,*" *&c.*

Body of the Subject.

1. *Its Effects.*

First Effect. Nourishment of the soul, preserving its life, strengthening it, and making it grow in virtue and sanctity: effect similar to the effect of ordinary food with respect to the body. Quote *John* vi. for each; and observe, that it was for this reason it was instituted under the appearances of bread and wine.

Illustration from the mysterious bread furnished to Elias, 3 *Kings* xix.

Second Effect. Indirect remission of mortal sin. **Explain,** how it would be a grievous sacrilege to go to Communion knowingly in a state of mortal sin, but that it may happen that a person in that state, and not knowing it, may sometimes approach the Divine table; in that case, the Holy Communion indirectly remits sin on account of the irreconcilable opposition between the Divine Guest, who enters the soul, and mortal sin. **Illustration** from the idol of Dagon, 1 *Kings.* **Relate** the fact, **and say:** they did wrong, not knowing it to be wrong, to introduce the Ark of the Covenant into the temple of an idol; but God, nevertheless, would not allow the co-existence of the idol with the Ark under the same roof. In the same way, &c. **(Apply comparison).** **Explain** also, how the Holy Communion is an antidote against mortal sin. **Quote** Council of Trent.

Third Effect. Direct remission of venial sin. **Explain** that we should endeavour to come to Holy Communion, not only free from mortal sin, but, as far as possible, from venial sin, especially deliberate and habitual venial sin. Still, this condition is not rigidly required, and if it should happen that a communicant has his soul stained with venial guilt, the Holy Sacrament, otherwise worthily received, will efface such venial guilt.

Fourth Effect. Remission of temporal punishment due to mortal sin. **Explain** this temporal punishment, and **state** that the Holy Communionremits it, having this effect by increasing charity in the soul. **Observe** that our Divine Lord came to cast fire on the earth, &c., and that He desires, especially as He enters our souls, to kindle in them this celestial fire. (*Luke* xii. 49). **Refer** to His words to Mary Magdalen, "*Many sins are forgiven her, because she hath loved much*" (*Luke* vii. 47); and **apply** the passage to the present matter, **observing** that the remission will be greater or less according to the degree of our charity.

Fifth Effect. Union with our Divine Saviour.

Quote *John* vi.; also St. Cyril of Jerusalem, "whereby we are made of the same body and blood" with Christ; and again, "whereby we are made carriers of Christ." (See fifth lesson of the office of the Octave day of Corpus Christi.) And St. Cyril of Alexandria says: "as when a person mixes wax with wax, both are blended together in one, so Christ is united with us in this holy mystery of union and love." (See seventh lesson, *Ibid.*)

Sixth Effect. A pledge of a glorious resurrection and a happy eternity. (*John* vi.)

Add some few words of admiration, thanksgiving, benediction, &c., after each point.

2. *Dispositions.*

Dispositions of Soul. Observe generally how in receiving a distinguished guest we remove everything that could be offensive in his eyes, and ornament our house, as well as we can, to make it worthy of him.

Quote St. Gregory, third lesson of the Office of Pentecost Sunday, beginning with the word "*Pensate*," and ending with "*Mentis*." (Quote in English) and infer this cleansing and ornamenting of our souls consists in procuring the requisite dispositions. Whence proceed to treat of the dispositions in order.

First disposition, a state of grace. This is the nuptial garment (*Matt.* xxii. 12); relate passage and apply it. Enlarge on the sacrilege of an unworthy communicant from 1 *Cor.* xi. Examples, see Life of St. Cyprian, Butler's "Lives of the Saints," vol. 9.

Second disposition, faith; enlarge.

Third disposition, hope; enlarge.

Fourth disposition, charity; enlarge.

Fifth disposition, desire; enlarge.

Sixth disposition, humility; enlarge: example of Centurion. (*Matt.* viii.)

Bodily dispositions.

1st. Fasting from midnight before. 2nd. Cleanliness in person, and becomingness in dress. A word or two on each. Say a comforting word for the poor, encouraging them to feel, that, after all, in their humble dress, they form the class of persons of whom our Divine Lord said, "*Blessed are the poor*," *&c.*

Conclusion.

End by a few words of exhortation.

Consult Theology, Catechism of Council of Trent; "Challoner's Meditations;" Bishop Hay's "Pious Christian," chap. iv., "Sincere Christian," vol. 2, chap. xxii., sec. 3; also Guillet's "Projets d'Instructions," c. Inst., &c.

THE BLESSED EUCHARIST.

SIXTH INSTRUCTION.

IMMEDIATE PREPARATION; MANNER OF RECEIVING AND THANKSGIVING AFTER.

"Let a man prove himself; and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of the chalice."—1 Cor. xi. 28.

Introduction.

Recapitulate chief points of preceding instruction, and announce the subject of this, saying a word or two on its importance, and invoke a blessing, then recommend as follows:

1. First, great recollection of mind, withdrawing one's self from every other thought and concern, to be entirely occupied with the great thought and concern of Holy Communion. **Observe** how the patriarchs and prophets, and just of the Old Law sighed and longed for the coming of our Divine Lord during four thousand years. "*Abraham rejoiced that he might see My day*," says our Divine Lord, "*he saw it* (in vision, as an event to come, at the distance of nigh two thousand years) *and was glad*" at the sight (*John* viii. 56.) So also "*many prophets and just men*," said our Blessed Saviour to the Jews, "*desired to see the things you see, and have not seen them.*" (*Matt.* xiii. 17.) And what was the desire of the holy Simeon to see our Blessed Lord! he begged that his life might be prolonged for such a happiness. **Apply by saying**: and now the happy morning is arrived for me notmerely to see this same Divine Lord, Saviour, Messiah, &c., but to receive Him into my breast. O what a thought! Banish, therefore, every other thought far away, in order to be absorbed in this, &c.

2. Leave home in time, and try to be in the church before Mass begins, and on your arrival occupy yourself with fervent prayer in making the preparatory Acts of Faith, Hope and Charity, Desire and Humility, &c., reading your preparation for Communion for this purpose as in your prayer-book. Those who cannot read, will occupy their minds, as well as they can, in thinking on Whom they are going to receive, on the one hand,

and on their own unworthiness, on the other, saying: "*God be merciful to me a sinner*" (*Luke* xviii. 13); "*Lord, I am not worthy, &c.* (*Matt.* viii. 8).

3. As Mass begins, offer up the Holy Sacrifice for the general ends, and especially for the grace of a holy and worthy Communion. As the Mass proceeds, inflame your devotion more and more. At the *Elevation* adore your Divine Guest. Who has now come down upon the altar in order to give Himself in a few minutes to you in the Holy Communion. At the *Pater Noster*, pour out your whole soul, reciting this prayer which our Blessed Saviour puts into your mouth. At the *Agnus Dei*, strike your breast with sentiments of profound contrition, asking pardon, first, of your sins of thought, secondly, of words, and thirdly, of acts. At the *Domine non sum dignus, &c.*, strike your breast again, and go down in spirit to the centre of the earth, in sentiments of profound humility, with which you will say, "*Lord, I am not worthy*," *&c.*

4. At the *Confiteor* before Communion renew once again your sorrow for your sins, in the sight of the whole court of Heaven, and invoke the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, &c.

5. When the Priest turns round to say *Misereatur Vestri, &c.*, and the *Indulgentiam, &c.*, feel as if you were at the throne of the Most High, once more begging pardon for all your transgressions, &c.

6. And as the time has arrived, you will approach the altar-rail with all exterior modesty and reverence, joined with the inmost piety of your soul. Without pressing forward too eagerly, you will take your place, as you find it convenient, at the altar-rail, and take the Communion-cloth in hand, waiting for the Priest to come. In the meantime, you will prepare to hold the cloth in a proper manner, which is, to take hold of the edge with your left hand, and press it under the chin, and then place the right hand under it and stretch it forward, so that, in case the Blessed Sacrament should fall by any accident from the fingers of the Priest, you should receive It on the cloth, and not allow It to drop to the ground. Remaining thus prepared, when the Priest reaches you, you will hold up your head, but not too much, and you will open your mouth moderately wide. Having done so, you will advance the tongue so as to cover the under lip, and when the Priest will have placed the Holy Communion on the tongue, you will receive It into your mouth and swallow

It with all reverence and devotion, and then retire to your place in the church to make your thanksgiving.

Observe that should the Blessed Sacrament become attached to the roof of the mouth, the communicant is not to be uneasy, and by no means is he to put his finger into his mouth, but he is to wait for a little time, till It becomes moistened when he can easily detach It by the action of the tongue, and swallow It.

Thanksgiving.

Urge the duty of thanksgiving, quoting St. Augustine, who says "Can our mind think of anything, our mouth speak of anything, or our pen write of anything better than *Thanks be to God?* Nothing shorter can be expressed, nothing more joyful heard, nothing more sublime conceived, nothing more useful done." (*Epist.* lxxvii.) To which add, from St. Augustine also (*Soliloq.* xviii.) "I know that ingratitude is very displeasing to thee, O Lord. It is the root of all that is evil in the spiritual life, a parching wind, burning all that is good, and obstructing the source of the divine mercy towards man." Relate the example of the ten lepers (*Luke* xvii. 12); and observe that St. Teresa says, the reason why so many do not derive the profit they ought from Holy Communion is, because they make their thanksgiving badly, and go away too soon.

Conclusion.

Some words of exhortation in conclusion in conformity with the subject.

Consult Bishop Hay's "Pious Christian," chap. xiv.; and Guillet's "Projets d'Instructions," cii. Inst.

THE BLESSED EUCHARIST.

SEVENTH INSTRUCTION:
VISITING THE BLESSED SACRAMENT.

"*Behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world.*"
Matt. xxviii. 20.

Introduction.

Observe, that our Divine Lord instituted the Mystery of the Blessed Eucharist, not only to be a Sacrifice and a Sacrament, but also that He might permanently abide with us in this

Adorable Mystery, and it is our ineffable happiness to possess Him really, truly, and substantially, at all times amongst us in the tabernacles of our churches, wherever the Blessed Sacrament is reserved. You walk into a church, though there be no Mass, or other function at the time; you observe a lamp lighted before the high altar, or perhaps some other altar of the church. That light denotes, that on that altar, and in the tabernacle, which you see over it, our Blessed Lord is permanently present, according to the love, which has made Him say, "*Behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world;*" and again: "*My delights were to be with the children of men.*" (*Prov.* viii. 31). As it has, therefore, pleased His unspeakable goodness thus to remain amongst us, and as He delights in being with us, is it not a sacred duty on our part to wish to be with Him, and with this view frequently to visit Him with the deepest sentiments of love and reverence? Hence visiting our dear Lord in the Holy Sacrament is a practice precious to every believing and devout Christian.

[Announce subject, invite attention, and invoke a blessing.]

Body of the Subject.

1. ***Motives for the devotion.***

1st. *A devotion necessary in accordance with our faith in the Real Presence.* Here observe, that our Blessed Lord is really present in the tabernacle, as He is on the altar in time of Mass, or in the Blessed Sacrament in time of Communion; therefore, the Church is His palace, and the tabernacle His throne amongst us. Take occasion to observe how the palaces of earthly monarchs are frequented, and how strange it would be if they were deserted. (Apply the comparison. Observe), that the primitive Christians would always have the Blessed Sacrament with them; that several saints spent their lives in a manner before It; that Institutes have sprung up in the Church for the perpetual adoration of It: that all good souls are attracted towards this Divine centre of devotion, which in a certain sense converts earth into heaven, &c. Exhortation.

2ndly. *Our Divine Lord desires to be frequently visited by us.* That is the precise purpose for which He is permanently present in the Holy Mystery. Quote text, "*Behold I am with you, &c.* "*It is My delight, &c.* Enlarge upon this idea by saying: He

is surrounded by innumerable spirits in heaven, who do Him constant homage; that, nevertheless, it is His wish and delight to be amongst us, to receive our homage here on earth. **Make** the case of a king leaving his capital, and going through his dominions. How would he be honoured, what crowds would flock around him, &c. (**Apply the comparison.**) Suppose the king's subjects to keep away from him, what indignity, &c. (**Apply** again, and **appeal** to the feelings of the audience).

3rdly. *These visits are most beneficial to us.* He is there a God of power and mercy, as in the highest heavens. He is, therefore, able and desirous to bestow His favours upon us, and to enrich us; and to encourage our visits, He says to us, "*Come to me all you that labour, and are burdened, and I will refresh you.*" (*Matt.* xi. 28.) **Enlarge** on this idea, and **make a comparison** of a king issuing a proclamation to his subjects, announcing that all his wealth and resources of every kind were at their disposal; how would they not flock around him? &c. (**Apply comparison.**) If there was only one place on the earth where our Divine Lord was present, what pilgrimages, &c. (**Enlarge** on this idea, and **apply** it.)

2. *Practices.*

1st. Persons passing by a church could spare a few moments to make a visit. 2ndly. Such as have time from their necessary occupations, should feel it a duty to make a special visit every day. 3rdly. In afflictions we should go there for consolation; in prosperity and success we should go there to make thanksgiving; in all serious undertakings we should ask light and assistance, &c. (**Relate** the fact of Saul, 1 *Kings* ix., **applying** especially verse 6, by an *a fortiori* argument.)

3. *The manner of visiting.*

1st. Faith and love will suggest what to say, also our wants and necessities, spiritual and temporal. 2ndly. We will be aided by the devotions we have in our books of piety towards the Blessed Sacrament. (**Recommend** St. Liguori's "Visits.")

Conclusion.

Recapitulate the motives, and end with an earnest exhortation.

Consult Bourdaloue's "Spiritual Retreat," Consideration on Visits to Blessed Sacrament.

THE BLESSED EUCHARIST.

EIGHTH INSTRUCTION: ON THE SACRED HEART OF JESUS IN THE MOST HOLY SACRAMENT.

"*They repaid Me evil for good.*"—Ps. xxxiv. 12.

Introduction.

Refer to previous instruction, and **say**: that having duly reflected upon the motives for visiting our Divine Lord in the Sacrament of the altar, we should have come to the resolution of paying Him our humble and affectionate visits as often as our duties and occupations will allow us to do so; and **go on to say**, that in these visits one object should be especially dear to every Christian soul; it is to make reparation to the Adorable Heart of our Divine Lord for all the ill-treatment He receives from mankind, who "*repay Him evil for good*," according to the words of your text, in this mystery of His love and goodness. Now, it was for this end that He Himself called into existence a special institute in the Church, under the title of "The Sodality of the Sacred Heart of Jesus."

[Announce this as the subject of your instruction, bespeak attention and add a few words of invocation.]

Body of the Subject.

1. *The object of devotion to the Sacred Heart of our Divine Lord in the Most Holy Sacrament.* **Show this** from the history of the Sodality, which **recite** here: and **observe** that it is His Sacred Heart in the literal sense, that, &c. (**here explain**), and state, that we do not, however, regard the Heart apart from the rest of the Humanity of our Divine Lord, but as united with it, and thereby united likewise to the Divine nature in His Person.

2. *The character of the devotion.* *Adoration* or supreme worship. Here **explain** the three kinds of worship: *Dulia*, or the inferior worship, which we give to the angels and saints; *Hyperdulia*, or the special inferior worship, which we give to

the Blessed Virgin; and *Latria*, or the supreme worship reserved for God alone. **Show** how this supreme worship is due to the Heart of our Divine Lord on account of its union with the Divinity, by the example of the body in the person of man sharing in the dignity of the soul, and entitled to the same honour.

3. *Motive of the devotion.* The love of our Divine Lord coupled with the unworthy treatment He receives from mankind in this Sacrament of love. Here **detail** the various kinds of unworthy treatment, and **ask**: does not all this require reparation, which is the purpose or end of the devotion?

4. *End, or purpose of the devotion.* Here **refer** again to the origin of the devotion to show this point, and **explain**, that, as it is in the heart one feels the insults and indignities he may have to suffer, so it is in the heart he feels consolation and comfort resulting from the reparation of such treatment. Hence infer, that the Heart of our Divine Lord is presented to us in this devotion as the seat of suffering, with respect to the injuries He has to endure, and at the same time the seat of consolation in the reparation we render to Him.

5. *The indulgences attached to the devotion.* **Observe** that they are very numerous: **mention** some of them, **noting** that they are equally applicable in the way of suffrage to the faithful in purgatory

6. *Aggregation or enrolment, and conditions.* **Explain** and **observe** that the devotion imposes no obligation under pain of sin, being founded on love for our Divine Lord, sympathy for what He has to endure in this Mystery of love, and zeal to make Him reparation.

Conclusion.

Recapitulate and exhort.

Consult Treatise on Sacred Heart of Jesus, especially Pastoral Letter of the Bishop of Boulogne, dated 22nd March, 1766, found in the beginning of Treatise.

INTRODUCTORY INSTRUCTION ON

THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE.

ITS END, EFFICACY, NECESSITY, OBLIGATION, AND PARTS.

"*Unless you shall do penance, you shall all likewise perish.*"—LUKE xiii. 3.

INTRODUCTION

Some observations on Penance in general, after which distinguish between Penance as a virtue and as a Sacrament; and say that it is in the latter sense you purpose speaking of it, in order to consider its end, &c., as stated above.

Add a few words on the importance of the subject, and a short appeal to the pious attention of the audience, with a few words of invocation.

BODY OF THE SUBJECT.

1. *The end.* State it from the definition of the Sacrament, and by reference to its institution (*John* xx. 23). Recite the passage, comment upon it, and show the end of the Sacrament set forth therein. Go on to show how the end differs from that of Baptism by explanations and example.

2. *Its efficacy* both as to the number of sins, and their enormity. After stating that it is unlimited in both respects, illustrate each, applying the words of our Divine Lord, which make no exception, and fix no limits. Some words of thanksgiving to God, and encouragement to the sinner.

3. *Its necessity.* 1st, because the means, and only means instituted by our Divine Lord; 2ndly, because compared by the Holy Fathers to Baptism; 3rdly, compared by the Holy Fathers and Council of Trent to a plank after shipwreck. Explain venial sin as only free matter of the Sacrament. Explain how, with regard to the Sacrament, its necessity, like that of Baptism, is satisfied by desire, when, owing to some insurmountable difficulty, a person cannot have actual recourse to it, on account of special circumstances in which he is placed. Mention one or two examples.

4. *Its obligation.* 1st, when we have the misfortune of falling into mortal sin; 2ndly, at least once a year, by precept of the Church (quote Council of Lateran); 3rdly, frequently, in particular cases, to avoid falling back into sin; 4thly, frequently, also, for all who desire to advance in virtue.

Its parts. Contrition, Confession, and Satisfaction; the Confession including, of course, Absolution on the part of the Priest. These parts to be treated separately.

CONCLUSION.

Recapitulate and end with some words of exhortation.

Consult Theology, Council of Trent, and Catechism of the Council; also Bishop Hay's "Sincere Christian," vol. 2, chap. xxiv.; Guillet's "Projets d'Instructions," ciii. Inst.

THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE.

SECOND INSTRUCTION: EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE.

"*If we would judge ourselves, we shall not be judged.*"—1 COR. xi. 31.

INTRODUCTION.

Refer to previous instruction, and recapitulate the heads, after which announce the present subject. Say the few words on its importance, bespeak the attention of the audience, and invoke a blessing.

BODY OF THE SUBJECT.

1. *Necessity of examination of conscience.*

The necessity of the examination, shown from the penitent having to mention in confession the mortal sins, all and each, that he can call to memory after a diligent examination. Quote the Council of Trent.

2. *Character of the examination.*

That it should be strict and diligent; quote the Council of Trent. State how God gives the sinner a choice to be his own judge, or to abide the judgment of Divine justice, according to the words of the text, which quote again; and illustrate the point by the example of a criminal, whose crimes a judge would have known, but to whom he would give pardon, on the condition, that he himself would acknowledge all and each of his transgressions, &c. Apply the supposition, observing that the examination the penitent makes preparatory to

confession is to be reviewed at the tribunal of the Supreme Judge. Quote the words of our Saviour (*Matt.* x. 32); also (1 *Cor.* iv. 5). Conclude the point with a word of exhortation.

3. *The manner of the examination, or how to set about it.*

To employ our memory in looking back so far as our confession is to extend, invoking beforehand the light of God's grace to clear up our forgetfulness, &c. Quote the example of Ezechias (*Isaias* xxxviii. 15); and the words of *Ps.* lxxvi. 7. Illustrate by the parable of the woman that lost a groat (*Luke* xv. 8). Apply the comparison. If you have time relate and apply the vision of Ezechiel (viii.); application to be made by the words, "*Son of man, dig in the wall*," that is, the wall of our self-love, of our forgetfulness, &c.

4. *Result of the examination.*

That the penitent must be prepared to state in confession what mortal sins he is guilty of, and how often in each case.

Here distinguish the cases where first he can find out *exactly how often;* 2ndly, where he can only say *in* or *about how often;* and 3rdly, *when the sin is habitual;* and point out what is to be done in each case. Mention the circumstances altering the nature of the sin, or adding to it the guilt of another sin, quoting Council of Trent on the matter.

Conclusion.

Sum up and end with some words of exhortation.

Consult Theology; Council of Trent and Catechism of Council; also Bishop Hay's "Pious Christian," chap. xiii., and Guillet's "Projets d'Instructions," cviii.

N.B.—Take care not to confound the third point with the *method* of the examination of conscience, which forms the subject of the following instruction. The object here is to show that the examination is to be made by a painstaking exercise of our memory, having first invoked the Divine Spirit. The examples and illustrations are to show the endeavours we must make, in order to employ our memory in recollecting our sins.

THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE.

THIRD INSTRUCTION:
METHOD OF EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE.

"*And it shall come to pass at that time, that I will search Jerusalem with lamps.*"—SOPHON. i. 12.

INTRODUCTION.

Refer to previous subject, recapitulating briefly the several points: after which announce present subject, dwelling a little on its importance by observing especially, that our examination of conscience previous to confession is to be reviewed by an all-seeing Judge, who will allow nothing to escape; who will, as He Himself declares, search Jerusalem with lamps, that is, with a strictness, that will take account not only of the evil deeds of sinners, but of the good works even of the just, who are represented by the holy city of Jerusalem. Invocation.

BODY OF THE SUBJECT.

Distinguish between the case of an examination extending over a short period, or long one, observing that the method must be different for each case.

1. *When the examination is for a short period.*

Specify the instances, a week, a fortnight, or a month, and lay down that in such instances one may be generally satisfied by using his own memory in looking back on the period in question, more especially if the penitent maintain a watchful attention over himself, and have the good habit of examining his conscience daily, at his night prayers. Recommend both these practices in a few words.

In this examination for a short period the penitent will proceed as follows: 1st, He will beg of God the necessary light. State briefly the reasons. 2ndly, He will carefully go over in his mind his daily occupations from morning till night. 3rdly, He will call to mind anything unusual or particular, that may have happened within the period in question, for which purpose he will think of the places he may have been in, the company he may have fallen in with, &c. 4thly, He is to take particular account of his predominant failing. Explain briefly what it is. Observe that besides his predominant failing, he is to examine himself as to other failings more or less customary; after which, take occasion to explain that in venial sins it is not necessary

to pursue a long and minute examination, but that it will be sufficient after having taken account of one's predominant failing, and one or two other of our more notable venial faults, to reserve the rest to be included in the general accusation we make at the end of our confession, saying: "for these and all my other sins," &c. In connection with this matter, *you will take occasion to* explain again the doctrine of venial sin being the free matter of the Sacrament of Penance. 5thly, The penitent having no grievous sin to recollect within the period in question, will recollect some grievous sin of his past life. Explain reason.

Finally recommend the penitent to make his examination, so as to be able to proceed orderly with his confession when making it. Thus he should be able to say to himself, before he ends his examination, as follows: "I have been to confession at such a time; I received absolution, and performed my penance. Since then I accuse myself, in the first place, of *so* and *so*, it is my predominant failing, and it happened *so* often. In the second place, I accuse myself of *so* and *so*, it is a failing to which I am also somewhat prone. In the third place, I accuse myself of *so* and *so*, on account of some occasion that came in my way since my last confession; and, in my past life, I accuse myself of *so* and *so*, for which I am heartily sorry. For these and all my other sins," &c.

2. *Method of examination for a long or considerable period.*

Insist upon the importance of the task, the pains that should be taken, after which some words of encouragement, inviting the penitent to accompany you in the explanation you are going to make of the subject.

Imagine the case of a person having a variety of dealings with a merchant for a number of years, and that he kept no account of the things he received; that at length the merchant furnishes his account, with a vast number of items, some large and some small. What, ask, would the customer do in that case? He might be shocked, in the first instance, at the account so long and varied, but recovering from the shock, he would carefully look over the account, item after item, stopping at each, till he would recollect if he had got the thing mentioned, so often as it is set down, and to the amount set down, and he would so proceed through the whole account, from beginning to end. Apply by saying, there is an account for a considerable time, for it may be years, between the penitent and Almighty God—a long and varied account: the penitent may not have kept it, but God has. The time is come for settling the account. But where is the account? It is to be found in

the table of sins, as we have it in our prayer-books, with this difference, that in the table of sins there are other items generally over and above those the particular penitent is chargeable with. The question, then, with the penitent is, how is he to set aside those which he is properly accountable for, from those for which he is not? To do this, he will observe the following particulars: 1st, he will take no account of venial sins, and as small sums are as troublesome in an account as large ones, setting aside venial sins will so far make the work of examination easy for the penitent. 2ndly, he will pause at each of the grievous sins, and he will ask himself the following questions: 1st, Was I guilty of that sin? If conscience say "no," he passes on to the next grievous sin. But if his conscience say "yes," he will still pause till he has asked himself *how often*, and he will remember the number. 2ndly, But he cannot fix the number exactly. Well, then, perhaps he can say *in or about how often*, and if so, he will so remember it. 3rdly, But it may be, that a particular sin has happened so often, that the penitent cannot remember *in or about how often*, much less can he remember exactly *how often*. Well, in that case the sin was habitual, and he will examine himself by asking: *how long* such a habit continued, and *how often*, or *in or about how often*, it used to happen *in the week*, *month*, *or year*, during that period? To explain this by an example, suppose any particular sin, for example drunkenness, and instance the three cases, *how often; in or about how often; and how often, or in or about how often in the week, month, &c.*

Explain the doctrine of forgetting a mortal sin; also the specific and numeric distinction of sins, saying of the former that it means every sin should be taken account of according to the kind of sin it is, so that the penitent be prepared to mention it by its proper name in confession; and of the latter that it simply means how often the sin had occurred. Explain the doctrine of the circumstances, distinguishing them, and giving an example, illustrating those that change the nature of a sin, or add to it the guilt of another sin. Recommend noting down one's sins, as he goes along through the table of sins, but in such a way as not to be legible by another, should the paper be lost.

Conclusion.

Recapitulate the points, insist again on the importance of the subject, adding some words of exhortation.

Consult Treatise on General Confessions, Conference iv.; also Theology on the subject.

THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE.

FOURTH INSTRUCTION:
ON CONTRITION.

"*Rend your hearts, and not your garments, and turn to the Lord your God.*"—JOEL ii. 13.

INTRODUCTION.

Recapitulate preceding instruction, and announce the subject of the present one, saying some words on its importance, and invoking a blessing.

BODY OF THE SUBJECT.

1. Contrition a necessary, and a most necessary, part of the Sacrament of Penance. Explain how, and assert, that most of the confessions that are invalid, are so from a want of contrition.

2. *Contrition divided into perfect and imperfect*, depending on a difference of motive and effect. Reserve the difference of motive for the present, and explain the other difference, illustrating it by an example.

3. *Qualities of contrition, whether perfect or imperfect.*

That it should be, first, interior; 2ndly, supernatural (here take occasion to mention the motives of contrition, and point out the difference as to motive between perfect and imperfect contrition); thirdly, supreme; fourthly, universal; fifthly, accompanied with a hope of pardon; sixthly, it should include a purpose of amendment.

1. N.B.—Explain each quality positively and negatively, by making cases by way of example.

2. N.B.—Reserve the last quality for another subject, stating so.

CONCLUSION.

Conclude by a recapitulation and afterwards an exhortation.

Consult Council of Trent; also see Guillet's "Projets d'Instructions," civ., cv. Inst.; Treatise on General Confession; also Bishop Hay's "Sincere Christian," vol. 2, chap. xxiv., sect. 2, Anecdote, Scaramelli vol. 4, 208; also Mary of Egypt. Either will be enough.

N.B.—Put the qualities of contrition each in cases negative and positive after explaining them respectively, and repeat explanation after showing it by the case.

THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE.

FIFTH INSTRUCTION: PURPOSE OF AMENDMENT.

'*Behold thou art made whole: sin no more, lest some worse thing happen thee.*"—JOHN v. 14.

INTRODUCTION.

Recapitulate preceding subject, observing that "the purpose of amendment" was reserved to form the subject of a distinct instruction.

A few words on its importance, remarking that it is the condition which tests the sincerity of contrition, and the condition also, which is most frequently wanting; after which beg a blessing.

BODY OF THE SUBJECT.

Qualities of the purpose of amendment. 1st, sincere; 2ndly, practical, that is, it must include the means of perseverance, which are: 1st, a constant spirit, and practice of penance: examples, David, Peter, Magdalen, Augustine; 2ndly, flight of occasions; 3rdly, frequentation of the Sacraments; 4thly, in case of relapse, to rise immediately, by going to confession as soon as possible; 5thly, pious reading; 6thly, earnest prayer, more especially in time of temptations, using ejaculations at the moment; suggest some of them; 7thly, devotion to the Most Holy Virgin.

A few words on each, as you go along.

CONCLUSION.

Sum up, and end with a short exhortation.

Consult Treatise on General Confessions, also Guillet's "Projets d'Instructions," civ., cv

THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE.

SIXTH INSTRUCTION.

THE METHOD OR MEANS OF EXCITING ONE'S SELF TO CONTRITION.

"*Be penitent, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out.*"—ACTS iii. 19.

INTRODUCTION.

Recapitulate previous subject, and announce the present one with a few words to engage attention, and invoke a blessing.

BODY OF THE SUBJECT.

1. *Means.*

First Means: Prayer. Insist on the necessity and efficacy of prayer, recommending the prayers in the prayer-book for that end.

Second means; Meditation on the motives. Enumerate the motives, hell, heaven, &c., dwelling somewhat on each, to show how the penitent is to reflect upon them, and add following observations:—1. Some are more perfect than others; the most perfect is that which is grounded on the perfections of God. Explain this, and illustrate it by the example of three children, who had offended their father. One of them is sorry, for fear of being disinherited; the second, because his father was so good to him; and the third, losing sight of himself, is sorry, because he offended so amiable and so good a father, a father so good in himself. Apply the comparison.

2. It is not necessary to meditate on all and each of these motives, but on such as affect us most. Give an example of how one may meditate on any one of them.

3. *Result to be arrived at.* 1st, a conviction that sin is the greatest of all evils; 2ndly, that the penitent is resolved to avoid it in future as such.

CONCLUSION.

Recapitulate and Exhort.

Consult Treatise on General Confessions; also Guillet's "Projets d'Instructions," civ. and cv. Insts.; Bishop Hay's "Sincere Christian," vol. 2, chap. xxiv. sect. 1.

THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE.

SEVENTH INSTRUCTION: CONFESSION.

"*And many of them that believed, came confessing and declaring their deeds.*"—ACTS xix. 18.

OR,

"*If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just, to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all iniquity.*"—1 JOHN i. 9.

INTRODUCTION.

Recapitulate preceding subject, and announce present one, after which bespeak attention and then a few words of invocation.

BODY OF THE SUBJECT.

1. *The necessity of confession.* Show it from the power of remitting and retaining sin, which requires the penitent to make his sins known to the minister of the Sacrament, that the latter may know whether he is to remit or retain the sins of such penitent. The same shown also from the constant practice of the Church.

Relate how in Germany, when the practice of confession was suppressed in many places by the Reformation, such was the inundation of vice, that the civil magistrates memorialized the Emperor Charles V., to order by public edict or decree, that the practice should be resumed.

Infer, therefore that confession being an essential part of the Sacrament of Penance, all the reasons, proving the Sacrament itself to be necessary for the remission of sin, establish the same necessity for confession. (Explain).

2. *Definition of confession;* after which, explain its conditions, which are chiefly *sorrowful*, *simple*, *entire* and *obedient*. Exhort to an observance of these conditions, lest we should have the misfortune, as St. Bernard says in his meditations, of adding sin to sin, where we should find the remedy of our sins.

Explain each, and dwell especially on the third, noticing in connection with it the specific and numeric distinction of sins, and the circumstances changing the species of sin, or adding to it the guilt of another distinct sin.

Enforce the condition of integrity by the following motives: 1st, the nature of the Sacrament; 2ndly, the sacrilege committed by

concealing; 3rdly, the seal of the Sacrament; 4thly, the fact of a confessor being acquainted with all sorts of sin, in the holy tribunal; 5thly, the confessor's obligation to be mild and kind to every one.

Add that it was with this condition of confession before his mind, that St. Bernard asserted: "Confession is of no use, unless it be made with truth in the mouth and purity in the heart," and, therefore, he exhorts the penitent that, "as there are Three, who are to bear witness in heaven for, or against us, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, so should we have three witnesses also on earth, our confessor, our heart, and our mouth, in order that, according to the words of the Apostle, "*in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may stand;*" that is, every word we utter in confession may have the Priest, our own heart and our lips to bear testimony to its truth and sincerity. (St. Bernard, *Med.* chap. ix.) Then mention some means for overcoming any fear or shame on the part of the penitent: 1st, to consider that the confessor holds the place of the Holy Ghost; 2ndly, to mention first the difficult matter; 3rdly, to reflect on the torture of conscience resulting from concealment.

Enforce the fourth condition from the functions of a confessor; 1st, as a father; 2ndly, as a judge; 3rdly, as a doctor; 4thly, as a physician. The penitent to be obedient, especially as regards bad habits, immediate occasions, making restitution, reconciliation with enemies, penance enjoined.

3. *Obligations of confession.* 1st, when one falls into mortal sin, he should not delay long in so sad a state. *Reasons*, from comparisons of a person getting a dangerous illness, and who sends at once for a physician, and takes remedies, &c. Hence, *Eccli.* v. 8, 9: "*Delay not to be converted to the Lord, and defer it not from day to day, For His wrath shall come on a sudden, and in the time of vengeance He will destroy thee.*" Alas! how many went to bed in mortal sin, and awoke amidst the flames of hell, by delaying going to confession. 2ndly, once a year, according to the Precept of the Church. 3rdly, as often as the confessor enjoins.

Exhort to frequent confession.

Conclusion.

Recapitulate and add a few words of exhortation.

See Council of Trent, and Catechism of the Council; also Consult Bishop Hay's "Sincere Christian," vol. 2, chap. xxiv., sec. 2; also Guillet's "Projets d'Instructions," cvi. cvii., and Treatise on "General Confession."

Anecdotes, if time permit; see Scaramelli, vol. 1, 312–314.

THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE.

EIGHTH INSTRUCTION:
MANNER OF MAKING CONFESSION.

"*He that hideth his sins shall not prosper; but he that shall confess and forsake them, shall obtain mercy.*"—PROV. xxviii. 13.

INTRODUCTION.

Recapitulate preceding instruction, announce the present subject engage attention, and invoke a blessing.

BODY OF THE SUBJECT.

1. Insist on its importance from the fact, that all the penitent has done up to this was no more than a preparation for the work now before him.

2. Recommend the penitent to consider the confessor not as a human being, but as one holding the place of the Holy Ghost. For this purpose, quote and apply the words, *John* xx. 21, 22, 23, saying that if the Holy Ghost Himself occupied a confessional in a Church, and a Priest, in the ordinary exercise of his ministry, occupied another, the penitent absolved by the latter would be absolved as effectively as the penitent on the other side by the Divine Spirit Himself, because the power exercised in each case would be the same.

3. As he kneels and blesses himself, he is to remind himself of the three Divine Persons. He is also to think of the Passion of Christ, through which the Sacrament is to have effect on his soul.

4. In saying the words, "*Bless me, father,*" he is to call to mind the office of the confessor, and that he is present himself as the prodigal to his father.

5. As he recites the "*Confiteor,*" he will consider himself before the whole court of heaven, especially in presence of the Blessed Virgin, and the saints he mentions, as he goes along.

6. Having said the words, "*through my fault,*" *&c.*, with an humble and contrite heart, he enters on his confession, first mentioning how long since his last confession, if he then received absolution, and if he performed his penance; after which, he confesses any sins he forgot in his previous confession.

7. He then proceeds with the declaration of his sins, in order, according as he is prepared to do so, mentioning first, as is recommended, what he has most difficulty in confessing.

8. If he require the assistance of his confessor he will respectfully ask it.

9. Having finished his confession, he says, "*for these and all my other sins*," *&c*, unless the confessor dispense with the form. He will then listen attentively to what instructions the confessor may give in his character of father, judge, doctor and physician.

10. When the Priest proceeds to pronounce the words of absolution, the penitent is to renew his sorrow, repeating, with an humble and contrite heart, his act of contrition.

Conclusion.

Sum up and finish with a few words of exhortation.

Consult Guillet's "Projets d'Instructions," cvi., cvii., Insts.; also Bishop Hay's "Sincere Christian," vol. 2, chap. xxiv. sec. 2, and treatise on General Confession; and treat the subject all through in a descriptive manner, keeping the penitent in view of the audience, as if they saw him in the various stages of his confession in regular order, from beginning to end. This effect may be greatly enhanced by making the penitent speak, or by speaking for him, and in his stead.

THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE.

NINTH INSTRUCTION;

JUSTIFICATION, OR WHAT IS EFFECTED IN THE SOUL OF THE PENITENT IN VIRTUE OF THE ABSOLUTION HE RECEIVES IN CONFESSION.

"*Be renewed in the spirit of your mind: and put on the new man, who, according to God, is created in justice and holiness of truth.*"—Ephes. iv. 23, 24.

Introduction.

Refer in a few words to preceding subject, and announce the present one, enlarging a little on its importance, and begging a blessing for self and audience.

Body of the Subject.

First effect: The soul is freed from the occupation of the devil. **Observe** that a soul in mortal sin is in possession of the devil, and several evil spirits may occupy it together (*Luke* xi. 24, 25, 26).

Second effect: The soul is released from the guilt of sin. **Observe** that a soul in mortal sin is in a state of bondage, being the slave of sin (*John* viii. 34), sin being the chain of his slavery. By the words of absolution this chain is broken and the soul is set free. **Illustrate** by the deliverance of St. Peter (*Acts* xii.). Also a soul in mortal sin is in a state of spiritual death, but the bonds of this spiritual death are burst asunder by the loosing power of absolution. **Illustrate** by the restoration of Lazarus to life. (*John* xi. 44.) **Apply** the illustration.

Third effect: The punishment of eternal death is remitted. A moment ago, were he to have died by any of the countless ways that death occurs, the sinner should have been instantly plunged into hell; were he to die now, heaven is his inheritance for ever, &c.

Fourth effect: The soul is cleansed from the defilements of sin. It is easy to conceive how a house, having been in the possession of an occupant of nasty and filthy habits, is left by him in a nasty and filthy state. Now, the devil is called everywhere by our Divine Lord, "the unclean spirit," and a soul occupied by him is in a state of uncleanness more filthy than we can imagine, or can be represented if all the filth of the world were heaped together. The grace of absolution cleanses it. **Quote** *Isaï.* i. 16; iv. 4; *Ps.* l. 9; *Apoc.* xxii. 14.

Fifth effect: The soul thus freed from the devil—thus freed from the guilt of sin, and the eternal punishment due to it, and washed clean from the defilements of sin, becomes the abode of the Holy Ghost. (1 *Cor.* iii. 17; vi. 19; 2 *Cor.* vi. 16.) **Show in addition** how, with the Holy Ghost, the Father and the Son take their abode likewise in such a soul, in a special manner, which we cannot explain, but which our Divine Lord mentions when He says: "*If any one love Me*"—which is truly the case of a soul possessing the Holy Ghost within her—"*My Father will love him, and We will come to him, and will make our abode with him.*" (*John* xiv. 23).

Sixth effect: The Holy Ghost taking possession of a soul restored to grace in the Sacrament of Penance, applies Himself at once to the ornamenting of it, with all the embellishments of grace. **Quote** 1 *Cor.* vi. 11. Council of Trent, sess. vi. cap 7: "*Non est solum peccatorum remissio, sed et sanctificatio et renovatio interioris hominis.*" **Explain** that this renovation and embellishment of the soul consists, first, in the divine or theological virtues of Faith, Hope, and Charity. Being Himself personally and substantially the Love of God, or Divine Charity, the Holy Ghost enkindles anew this heavenly virtue of Charity within us, and by it restores life to the virtues of Faith and Hope, which were dead in the soul, the soul herself being dead, whilst in a state of mortal sin; secondly, in the infusion of the moral virtues, which, with sanctifying grace, are poured into the soul, according to the general opinion of theologians; thirdly, in the gifts of the Holy Ghost; fourthly, in His fruits. With all these embellishments the Holy Ghost diffuses a light and splendour through all the faculties of the soul, rendering her thereby, as the Catechism of the Council of Trent expresses it, more beautiful and resplendent.

Seventh effect: The absolved penitent is made, over again, a child of God (*Rom.* viii. 15, 16).

Eighth effect: Made heir to the kingdom of heaven (*Rom.* viii. 17; *Tit.* iii. 7; 1 *Peter* iii. 22).

Ninth effect: Made partaker of the Divine Nature (2 *Peter* i. 4; *John* xv. 5; *Heb.* iii. 14), with *comment* of "*Triplex Expositio*" on last text. "*Da nobis per hujus aquæ et vini,*" *&c.*: Liturgy, at the mixing of water with the wine in the chalice at Mass (where **observe** not only the words, but also the symbol). Thus, the soul partaking of the nature and life of God in the same way as the vine-branch partakes of the nature and life of the vine itself, becoming identified with God, and, in a manner, deified, according to the words of the Apostle: "*I live, now not I; but Christ liveth in me*" (*Galat.* ii. 20); and the still more remarkable words of the Psalmist: "*You are gods, and all of you the sons of the Most High.*" (*Ps.* lxxxi. 6). Hence we become invested with the perfections of God, with His wisdom, fortitude, constancy, justice, charity, and other attributes, which He communicates to us by His grace, whereby we live in God, and God in us, we do the works of God, or rather God worketh in us, as the Apostle says, "*both to will and to accomplish, according to His good will.*" (*Phil.* ii. 13).

Conclusion.

After proving each of these effects, you will re-assert it, adding some words expressive of wonder, or gratitude, or humility, or praise, benediction, &c.: and present a synoptic view of them all by a recapitulation in the end, exhorting the audience to persevere in the happiness they have acquired by recovering the grace of God in the Sacrament of Penance.

N.B.—Observe, before recapitulation, that though you mentioned the effects of absolution *one after another*, they are not to be understood as produced successively. They are all produced simultaneously, just as light admitted into a room fills it up at once, expelling at the same instant the darkness which had previously occupied it.

Consult Theology on Justification, also Council of Trent and Catechism of the Council on the same subject.

THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE.

TENTH INSTRUCTION: ON THANKSGIVING AFTER CONFESSION, AND SATISFACTION.

"*In all things give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you all.*"—1 Thess. v. 18.

Introduction.

Recapitulate previous instruction, announce the present, invite attention, and a few words of invocation.

Body of the Subject.

The penitent after having received absolution in the holy tribunal retires to make his thanksgiving. Explain reasons for doing so. Quote Saint Augustine: "Can our mind think of anything, our mouth speak of anything, or our pen write of anything better than *Thanks be to God?* Nothing shorter can be expressed, nothing more joyful heard, nothing more sublime conceived, nothing more useful done." (*Epist.* lxxvii.) Refer to the example of the ten lepers, and, after reciting it, apply it to your purpose (*Luke* xvii. 18). Observe that he

will find prayers for thanksgiving in the ordinary prayer-books. As for those who cannot read, they can thank God in their hearts, reflecting on the great blessing they have received. Suggest the example of St. Peter, reciting how he was released from his chains and delivered from prison. Apply and conclude, that as he was grateful and returned thanks to God for his release, &c., so should the penitent on being released from the chains of sin, and delivered, as if out of a prison, from the slavery of Satan. He finally renews all his good purposes, resolving to be faithful in carrying out the injunctions of his confessor.

2. Proceed to the subject of *Satisfaction*, mentioning it to be the third part of the Sacrament of Penance, or what is more generally understood as "the Penance" the confessor has appointed for the penitent to perform after his confession. Give one or two examples of prayers, fasting, and alms-giving; whence proceed to define theologically what satisfaction is (definition).

Lay down its necessity as being an integral part of the Sacrament, and having been ordained to supply, according to the words of St. Paul, "*what is wanting of the sufferings of Christ.*" (*Col.* i. 24). Hence the Council of Trent, sess. xiv., chap. viii. (Quote the passage).

3. *The qualities* of the *Penance* should be *vindicative*, or *punitive*, and *medicinal*, or *curative*. Explain that the confessor must have these effects in view in the penance he enjoins. Hence infer that in so far as it is punitive, there must be a certain proportion between the penance and the penitent's guilt; and so far as it is curative, the confessor is to be guided by his science and experience, as a spiritual physician.

Observe the error of *some* who make no more account of their penance than their *ordinary* prayers, or other *good works*, whereas the penance, being part of the Sacrament, has a sacramental obligation, and sacramental effect likewise.

Observe also that, whilst the confessor has in view a certain proportion between the guilt of the penitent, and the amount of penance, he must, at the same time, take account of his strength, or weakness in a spiritual sense, and not enjoin a penance beyond what he can reasonably expect will be performed. On this account, when he cannot get the penitent to go with him all the way to heaven by a large penance, he must be content to have brought him as far as purgatory.

Observe that *satisfactory* works or penances are of various kinds as pointed out by the Council of Trent; fasting, and all sorts of bodily austerities; alms, including all the works of mercy, spiritual and corporal; prayer, including all acts of religion. Say a passing word on each.

4. Observe, how, even after the performance of the penance, some further satisfaction may yet remain to be performed; and, on this

account, some fervent penitents ask their confessor over and above the penance he gives them, to enjoin upon them as penance certain prayers, or good works they are otherwise in the habit of, in order that these prayers and good works may have a sacramental efficacy.

5. Refer to the canonical penances, giving a few examples, and inferring, first, the idea early Christians had of mortal sin, and secondly, their great fervour in undertaking such long and painful penances; after which ask: Is not sin yet the same? &c., and infer how Christians should lead penitential lives, receive all the trials of life in a spirit of penance, &c.

Conclusion.

Recapitulate, adding a few words of exhortation.

Consult Council of Trent, as also Catechism of the Council of Trent, Guillet's "Projets d'Instructions," cx., cxi. Insts., and Bishop Hay's "Sincere Christian," vol. 2, chap. xxiv. sec. 3.

THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE.

ELEVENTH INSTRUCTION.
ON GENERAL CONFESSIONS.

"*Let the fear of the Lord be with you, and do all things with diligence.*' — 2 Paralip. xix. 7.

Introduction.

We have treated the Sacrament of Penance very much at length, according to its various parts and divisions. We have done so, because our all depends upon it. In a few years, we shall be away out of this world, and must be either amongst the blessed in heaven, or the damned in hell, to abide in one or the other, for all eternity; and this momentous alternative depends, for most Christians, on the Sacrament of Penance. Having forfeited the innocence of our Baptism, if we are to be saved, it must be by Penance, and if it be our miserable lot to be damned, this is to be for not having been pardoned by means of the Sacrament of Penance. This, the enemy of our salvation

knows most thoroughly, and therefore tries, by every means in his power, to pervert the Sacrament of Penance in our use of it, and make it an occasion of perdition for poor sinners. He acts towards us as an enemy invading a country, who would poison all the fountains and springs, in order that, instead of the refreshing and salutary waters the inhabitants were in the habit of drawing, they would find deadly poison. We are, therefore, to be on our guard against the deadly enemy of our souls, and not allow him to poison the spring of life and salvation we have in the Sacrament of Penance. This we will do, with God's grace, by attending to the words of the text I have quoted: "*Let the fear of the Lord*," &c. Yes, it is by diligence we are to prevent such a misfortune, that is, by a diligent performance of all that is required on our part in order to receive the Sacrament with the dispositions required. But if a person have not done all that is required of him, and if on that account, he has failed to receive the Sacrament as he ought, is there any remedy remaining? Yes, thank God, the mercy of God has provided a further mercy still, even where His mercy has been abused.

What is this further mercy? It is that, which is provided in repeating over again the confessions the poor sinner has made since by a bad confession he had abused the Sacrament, and this repeating of his past confessions is called a general confession. It may reach back on one's whole life, in which case it is a general confession in the strict sense of the expression "general," or it may reach back only to a certain period, in which case it is termed a partially general confession. We are to treat it, with God's help, in both these senses. What a subject have we before us! how important! how many souls to be saved by it, and how many to be lost, if they have not recourse to this remedy, which the mercy of God has left them, to repair bad confessions, which they have had the misfortune of making perhaps years and years ago! Let us, therefore, lift up our hearts on high, and beg God's grace, &c.

Body of the Subject.

1. A general confession, whether total and including the entire life of the penitent, or partially general, reaching back only to a certain period, and making over again all the confessions since that period, may be necessary, or, without being necessary, may be useful, or it may be neither necessary nor

useful. Hence our subject divides itself into three branches, raising the questions: when, in the first place, a general confession is necessary; when, in the second place, it is useful without being necessary; and when, in the third and last place, it is neither necessary nor useful. Let us apply ourselves to these three questions in order.

In the first place, when is a general confession necessary? It is necessary in the following cases:

The first case is, when a person has knowingly and wilfully, through shame or any other motive, concealed a mortal sin in any of his past confessions, or what amounts to the same in this instance, a sin which he believed, or, at least, suspected to be a mortal sin, and has continued to conceal it in his following confessions. **Explain** the words *knowingly* and *wilfully*, so as to distinguish the case made from that of forgetfulness or inculpable omission. **Also explain** the words *mortal sin*, so as to distinguish it from venial.

The second case is, when a person has made his past confessions without having examined his conscience before going to confession, or made his examination so carelessly as to have exposed himself very much to the danger of omitting some mortal sin in confession. **Explain**, and make suitable allowance for dull and uninstructed penitents, as also for young persons.

The third case is, when a person has divided the confession of his sins between different confessors, so as not to confess to the confessor, from whom he receives absolution, all the mortal sins of which he was guilty since he had received absolution before. **Explain.**

A fourth case is, when a person has gone to confession, and received absolution without being sorry for his sins. **Explain** that an amendment of life, as the result of a firm purpose of amendment, is the best sign that one has been truly sorry for his sins.

A fifth case is, when a person has been ignorant of the principal Mysteries of Religion, or of the nature and purpose of the Sacrament of Penance, and has been to confession and received absolution in this state of ignorance. **Explain** and **add**: these are the only cases in which a general confession is necessary, and **proceed** to the cases in which, though not necessary, it would be useful. They are the following:—

2. *First*, when a person is about to enter upon a new state of

life, for instance, a business situation, a profession, or married life. **Give reasons** arising, first, from the levity of youth, and the vicissitudes of rise and fall so frequent in early life; secondly, from the importance of a good beginning, when entering on a stable condition of life.

Secondly, when one feels himself urged by a strong desire to devote himself more earnestly and fervently to God's holy service. **Explain** and **show** how a general confession, by breaking with the remissness of the past, would be an excellent commencement of a better life for the future.

Thirdly, when a person, either by free choice, or on account of declining years, or impaired health, withdraws himself from the active occupation of life, and thereby renders himself more free to devote himself unreservedly to the concern of his salvation; **show reasons** arising out of the uncertainty of life and death, and the importance of making the best preparation for the other world.

3. Cases in which a general confession is neither necessary nor useful. These cases are, when a person has already made a good general confession, or more than one, but feels scruples about it, or is uneasy and miserable in his mind, without sufficient cause, about his past life. A general confession in such cases would be injurious, and the penitent is to be dissuaded from making it. **Allow**, however, for the repetition of a general confession, when a considerable time has elapsed since the former; as also when a penitent would be moved to undertake it from motives of humility, and with a view to increased sorrow for the past.

4. **Proceed to explain** confessions partially general, or annual confessions, including the confessions of the year. The reasons are the same for both, namely, the clearer knowledge we acquire of our spiritual state by comparing the present with the past, at a considerable interval, and the renewed resolution we take to overcome our failings, and give ourselves more fervently to God's holy service. **Observe**, however, that in these repetitions made out of devotion, one is not bound to the integrity of confession in the same way as in general confessions made under obligation, as being necessary.

5. As a preparation for a general confession **recommend** a few days' retreat if possible, or at least some days of serious consideration, examination, and prayer.

Conclusion.

Conclude by observing there are countless souls in hell, who would be in heaven had they made a general confession, and there are countless souls in heaven, who owe their salvation to a general confession. **Relate the fact** in the life of St. Vincent de Paul, which was the providential occasion of the institution of the Congregation of the Mission, a chief purpose of which Institute is to exhort the faithful to make general confessions during their missions.

Consult Treatise on General Confessions.

INDULGENCES.

"*Be at agreement with thy adversary betimes, whilst thou art in the way with him; lest perhaps the adversary deliver thee to the judge, and the judge deliver thee to the officer, and thou be cast into prison. Amen I say to thee, thou shalt not go out from thence till thou repay the last farthing.*"—Matt. v. 25, 26.

Introduction.

Refer in general terms to the preceding course of instructions on the Sacrament of Penance, and **state** that the subject you are going to treat of, has a near affinity to that Sacrament. **Announce it. A word or two** on its importance.

Bespeak attention, and a short **invocation.**

Body of the Subject.

1 Before saying what an indulgence is, **say**: you desire to mention what it *is not*, as the doctrine of the Catholic Church is misrepresented by heretics on this subject.

Say, first, that an indulgence is not a permission, as some enemies of the Church allege, to commit sin (**enlarge**); secondly, that it does not remit sin, so much the contrary, that sin must be remitted, and the soul in a state of grace, before an indulgence can take effect; thirdly, it does not dispense with our own penitential endeavours, inasmuch as it supposes a true desire on our part of satisfying God's

justice by our endeavours to that effect, and has not its *full* effect as long as there remains in the soul any attachment not only to mortal, but even to venial sin.

2. Define it, and explain by distinguishing three things in mortal sin, viz. the guilt, the eternal punishment, and the temporal punishment yet generally remaining, after the guilt and eternal punishment have been remitted in the Sacrament of Penance. Illustrate by examples, as set down in Theology, of the temporal punishment being reserved.

3. Distinguish between *plenary* and *partial* indulgences as to effect, dwelling somewhat upon *partial*.

State how either, in many instances, may be applied *in the way of suffrage* to the souls in purgatory. State some examples, and how we can do this charity to the poor sufferers in purgatory.

4. Indicate the source whence indulgences are derived, namely, the treasury of the Church. This treasury of the Church composed of the superabundant merits of our Saviour, Blessed Virgin Mary, and the Saints. Explain.

5. Point out the conditions, first, to be in a state of grace; secondly, to be free from all affection to sin, at least for a plenary indulgence; thirdly, to perform the works to which the indulgence is attached. Some examples of plenary and partial indulgences.

6. Mention the authority to grant indulgences: the ordinary authority the Pope. Bishops on certain particular occasions can grant partial indulgences.

Conclusion.

Exhort the audience to avail of as many indulgences as possible, for both themselves and the suffering souls in purgatory.

Consult Council of Trent, and Catechism of the Council; also Guillet's "Projets d'Instructions," cxii. Inst., and Bishop Hay's "Sincere Christian," vol. 2, chap. xxiv., appendix i.

EXTREME UNCTION.

HOLY VIATICUM AND PREPARATION FOR DEATH.

"*Is any man sick among you? Let him bring in the priests of the Church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith shall save the sick man: and the Lord shall raise him up: and if he be in sins, they shall be forgiven him.*"—JAMES v. 14, 15.

INTRODUCTION.

A few words, observing how great and constant is the goodness of God, who, having instituted Sacraments for every period of our life, has instituted a special Sacrament to aid us in our last struggle, when He summons us to appear before Him in the next life, &c. This Sacrament is called "*Extreme Unction*," or last anointing, a name taken from the holy oil used as the matter of the Sacrament.

Announce this as the subject of your Instruction; invite attention, and invoke a blessing.

BODY OF THE SUBJECT.

1. *The importance of this Sacrament.*

Quote St. James v. 14, 15; and comment on the words, 1. "*If any man be sick among you.*" Dwell upon the words "*If any man*," and state who are to be anointed (See Roman Ritual); then apply yourself to the words "*be sick;*" explain the degree of sickness meant; that the Sacrament is to be administered but once in the same illness, &c. (Roman Ritual).

Take occasion to observe that the Apostle does *not* say, if any one be dying amongst you: and inculcate the duty of sending for the Priest in time, reprobating the unchristian idea that the sick person is not to be frightened by bringing the thought of death before his mind. (Quote *Eccli.* xxxviii. 9, 10, 11, and the opposite examples of *King Asa*, 2 *Paralip.* xvi. 12, 13, and of *King Ezechias*, 4 *Kings* xx.; one neglecting his soul, and attending only to the care of his body, the other having recourse to spiritual aid in his sickness).

2. *Matter of the Sacrament and how applied.*

"*Let him bring in the priests of the Church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord.*" Observe how these words point out the matter of the Sacrament, and show how, in a general way, it is applied.

3. *Its effects.* "*And the prayer of faith,*" *&c.* These words point out the effects of the Sacrament: one is corporal, the other spiritual. Explain, with regard to the first, that the Sacrament does not work a miracle, but aids the natural powers of the body; and here take occasion again to exhort that the priest should be sent for in time, inasmuch as, if it be put off until the patient's strength is completely exhausted, so as to require a miracle for his recovery, Extreme Unction can do nothing for his bodily cure: whereas it is a matter of experience, that frequently sick persons are remarked to get better at once, and to recover, when the Sacrament is administered in proper time.

As to the second effect, since the Sacrament is a Sacrament of the living, and supposes a state of grace, we are to understand the direct effect to be, in the first place, the remission of venial sin—mortal sin having its remedy in the Sacrament of Penance; then state the other effects as to the "remnants" of sin, &c. (*See* Catechism of the Council of Trent).

4. *Preparation and disposition required for the Sacrament of Extreme Unction.* 1. Confession. If the sick person be in mortal sin, this condition is essential. Hence inculcate again the necessity of sending for the Priest in time, and how dreadful to delay until the patient is unable to make his confession, upon which his eternity is staked, &c. State also that, even though one be not conscious of mortal sin, still confession is, by all means, advisable as a preparation for Extreme Unction. Go on to point out, how the patient is to correspond in mind and heart with the ceremonies performed by the Priest in anointing him, reciting them in detail as in the Ritual, and suggesting the sentiments proper for each of the unctions.

5. *The Holy Viaticum.*

Explain what the word means, and apply the meaning to the occasion, after which enlarge on the goodness of our Divine Redeemer in making Himself our Viaticum in our journey out of this life into eternity. Illustrate this goodness with an argument *a fortiori* by the following examples: 1st, an angel in a cloud by day, and a pillar of fire by night, to conduct the Israelites to the Promised Land. In the *Viaticum* our dear Lord comes Himself to conduct the dying Christian to a better land of promise, the kingdom of heaven. 2ndly, an angel sent to conduct the young Tobias on his journey into a strange land, &c. But in the *Holy Viaticum* it is our Divine Lord Himself who comes to conduct us through the valley of death to the land of the living, the heavenly Jerusalem. 3rdly, Elias fed by an angel in the desert, and strengthened so as to be able to continue his journey for forty days and forty nights to the mount of God, Horeb (3 *Kings* xix.)

Quote the words of our Divine Lord, and apply them to the Holy Viaticum: "*In My Father's house there are many mansions; and I*

shall go, and prepare a place for you, I will come again and take you to Myself, that where I am, you also may be." (*John* xiv. 2). Add, that St. John Chrysostom, in his book on the Priesthood, relates of a holy man, that he saw a company of angels in the form of men surrounding the bed of a sick man after he had received the Holy Viaticum. "These heavenly spirits," remarks the saint, "came in this way out of reverence for the Holy Sacrament, and, if the dying man had received the Adorable Body of Jesus Christ with worthy dispositions, his soul was immediately borne to heaven, accompanied by this troop of angels."

6. *What should be done by the people of the house in connection with the administration of the last Sacraments.*

1. To send for the Priest in good time; urge this, and condemn all false delicacy towards the patient in the matter. 2ndly, to prepare a table decently covered, holy water, candles, and crucifix 3rdly, to help the patient to prepare himself for the last Sacraments, by reading for him, and praying with him. 4thly, to assist reverently during the administration of the Sacraments. 5thly, to take from the Priest the instructions he will give as to the assistance they will render the patient, especially by pious ejaculations at the moment of expiring, and the invocation of the Sacred Name of Jesus, remembering the plenary indulgence attached to it.

Relate the following anecdote on the authority of the pious Father Nieremberg, S.J., in his excellent little work, entitled "Passage from Time to Eternity." He took it from the life of the Venerable Mother Elizabeth, a discalced Carmelite, and assistant of the great St. Teresa, written by the celebrated Father Michael de Lanza, of the Order of St. Dominick. The anecdote is as follows: "A nun of exemplary piety, and one of the first discalced Carmelites, fell into her agony after a long illness. The nuns, who were attending her, were afflicted on observing that in her prostrate condition she could not speak a word, or give the least sign to show what were the dispositions of her soul at a moment so critical. Well, as she continued in this state a considerable time, the Venerable Mother Elizabeth bent over her, and, putting her mouth to the ear of the poor sufferer, suggested to her several pious aspirations, especially mentioning the last words of our dying Saviour: "*Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit.*" The dying nun soon expired; and what happened? The Venerable Mother Elizabeth went to Mass, a Mass that was celebrated that very day for the repose of the soul of the deceased nun, during which our Lord caused her to see her all shining in glory, and said to her, in

the bottom of her heart, "*She is of the number of those who follow the Lamb without spot.*" The deceased returned her thanks at the same time for having suggested to her the pious ejaculations that spared her purgatory, as she assured her, and raised her to a high degree of glory in heaven. The pious writer, after reciting this fact, which, he adds, was attested to by several persons, of solid piety, profound learning, and sound understanding, besides the author, from which he quoted it, observed how it shows the great importance of whispering into the ears of dying persons pious ejaculations, with which they may give forth their soul into the hands of their Creator.

Conclusion.

Finish with some reflections on the goodness of our Divine Lord in providing such precious helps for the moment, on which eternity depends, &c.

Consult Council of Trent, and Catechism of the Council; Guillet's "Projets d'Instructions," cxiii. Inst.; Bishop Hay's "Sincere Christian," vol. 2, chap. xxv., and "Passage from Time to Eternity," pp. 71, 90.

THE SACRAMENT OF ORDERS.

"*He gave some Apostles, and some Prophets, and other some Evangelists, and other some Pastors and Doctors, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the Body of Christ.*"—Ephes. iv. 11, 12.

Introduction.

Our Blessed Lord and Saviour, being about to pass from this world to His Eternal Father, wished to provide for the continuance of His Divine mission here on earth till the end of time. Therefore, He said to His Apostles, "*all power is given to Me in heaven and on earth,*" and in virtue of that power, "*as My Father sent Me I send you.*" Accordingly, the Apostles, in their turn, were to communicate their powers to others, who were to extend and continue their work, "*for the perfecting of the saints, for the*

edifying of the Body of Christ," according to the words of my text, that is, for the building up of the Church of Christ, "*which He hath purchased with His own blood.*" (*Acts* xx. 28). Now, for this great object our Blessed Redeemer was pleased to institute a special Sacrament—the Sacrament of Orders: a Sacrament all the more important, as the power of administering the other Sacraments is derived from it as from its source. Having, therefore, treated so much at large of the other Sacraments, we proceed, in God's holy name, to speak this evening of this Sacrament, which comes next in order after the Sacrament of Penance in the enumeration of the Seven Sacraments.

[Invite attention and invoke a blessing.]

Body of the Subject.

1. **Define the Sacrament** in the words of Butler's Catechism, **adding:** or more accurately, "a Sacrament which confers spiritual power on the person ordained, together with grace for the proper performance of the various functions of his ministry;' and **go on to explain** that this spiritual power regards, in the first place, the natural Body of Christ, or the Mystery of the Blessed Eucharist; and, secondly, the mystical Body of Christ, consisting of the faithful composing His Church on earth.

2. The Blessed Eucharist being, according to the words of St. Dionysius, "the Sacrament of Sacraments," the principal services and ministries of the Church are ordained for the ultimate end, that it be duly and worthily celebrated; in the same way as the material church or building, the altar, sacred vestments, and all other requisites, are blessed and consecrated with a view to the same great purpose.

Different from the other Sacraments, the Sacrament of Orders consists of degrees, according to the gradation or rank of the various services connected with the celebration and administration of the Most Holy Eucharist. Hence they are divided into Minor Orders, and Greater or Holy Orders; the Minor Orders being (*n.n.*), and the Holy Orders being Sub-Deaconship, Deaconship, and Priesthood.

Here observe, you make no difference between a Priest and a Bishop, the ministry of both being the same with respect to the Blessed Eucharist; and say, that later on you will point out the difference between them with reference to the mystical Body of Christ.

3. *These Sacred Orders are to be received one after another*, according to their rank, respectively, and some interval is to be allowed between them, in order to afford time for their functions, as also that the aspirant may advance from virtue to virtue, as he advances from one Order to another. Beneath all the Orders there is a sacred ceremony called Tonsure, which is, as it were, an introduction to them, and creates a state called clerical, giving the title of cleric to the person receiving it.

Explain the ceremony, and Observe how the Tonsure continues to be worn in Catholic countries by all Ecclesiastics, and even by the Pope himself; that it is otherwise called a "crown," being an emblem of royalty, according to the words of St. Peter, "*You are a kingly priesthood.*" (1 *Pet.* i. 9). Explain how, like the Tonsure, the various Orders have their respective ceremonies, or ordinations, in accordance with their respective ends, and the functions belonging to each. Proceed to state the end of each, and how administered, *ascending* from the lowest upwards to Priesthood inclusively, and mentioning very briefly what is said and done by the Bishop in the essential part of the ordination, and *in speaking of the Order of Exorcist*, Observe, that, in the beginning of the Church, it was no uncommon thing for people to be possessed bodily by evil spirits, as we read in the Gospel.

4. *The effects of the Sacrament.*

1st, an increase of sanctifying grace, as in the other Sacraments; 2ndly, special grace for the functions attached to each Order; 3rdly, a character.

5. *All the Orders take their dignity and sanctity from the Mystery of the Blessed Eucharist*, especially the Priesthood, which imparts power to consecrate this Adorable Mystery, and is a participation of the Priesthood of Jesus Christ, who is Priest for ever, according to the order of Melchisedech. Therefore, the Ministers of the Church in Sacred Orders are called "*men of God*," "*angels of the Lord*," "*ministers of Christ*," "*dispensers of the Mysteries of God*," &c.

Quote the words of the "Imitation of Christ," in English, bk. iv. chap. v. 3.

6. So far the spiritual power of Orders in reference to the Natural Body of Christ, or the Blessed Eucharist. It remains to speak of the power the Sacrament confers with respect to the Mystical Body, that is, the faithful or members of the Church, who, by their union, constitute, in a mystic or figurative sense,

the one and the same body designated the Mystic Body of Christ, according to the words of St. Paul (1 *Cor.* xii. 12 & 27); which quote, and go on to say, that the Sacrament of Orders presents to us, in reference to the Mystic Body of Christ, quite distinct views from those you have been considering with respect to the Natural Body, or the Mystery of the Blessed Eucharist. *Entering upon these views, you will now* distinguish between the Orders of Priest and Bishop, showing the latter to possess the *fulness* of the Priesthood, as derived from the Apostles, so as to be their successors, inheriting from them all the powers which they had themselves received immediately from Christ for the propagation and continuance of His kingdom on earth. Therefore, as the Apostles in their day ordained Priests and consecrated Bishops in every city as they were required (*Tit.* i. 5), visiting and ruling over them, so the Bishops, in every age, and by Divine authority, rule the Church of God, being so appointed, as St. Paul tells us in his remarkable words (*Acts* xx. 28); which quote. It belongs to them, accordingly, to provide for the various wants of the Church, ordaining Priests and other sacred ministers, administering the Sacrament of Confirmation, and performing certain benedictions and other functions specially reserved for their office.

7. Observe further, the distinction to be made between *the power* they confer on Priests and other ministers in ordination, and *the right of jurisdiction* they still reserve for authorizing the exercise of that power, as also of restraining it, and suspending it, as, for example, the case of a Priest with respect to the Sacrament of Penance, &c.

Hence Bishops are taken out of the ranks of the ordinary Priesthood, and specially consecrated for their office, in which by Divine right they are above the Order of Priests, not only in rank and dignity, but in power and authority.

8. But the Bishops themselves, have they not superiors over them in the Church? Yes, there are Bishops over Bishops in regular gradation, till we arrive at him who is the Bishop of Bishops, the head of the entire Ecclesiastical Hierarchy, our Holy Father the Pope, who reigns supreme over the universal Church, holding the place of Christ as His Vicar on earth, with pre-eminence not only of rank but of jurisdiction to govern the entire flock of Christ, as well the *sheep* as the *lambs* of the fold. Here quote the Council of Florence, as in the Church

Treatise, respecting the Pope; and then proceed to describe the beautiful order in which the government of the Church is arranged, with her Divine Founder at her head, having the Pope for Vicar, and under the Pope, in regular gradation, Patriarchs, Primates, Archbishops, Bishops, Priests, with their assistants or vicars; and descant on the unbroken continuance of this harmonious arrangement, maintained by the Sacrament of Holy Orders from age to age, despite persecutions, revolutions, &c.

Conclusion.

Present the Church thus constituted as entitled to the veneration and obedience of the faithful, &c.

Consult Council of Trent, and Catechism of the Council; Theology on the Sacrament of Orders; Guillet's "Projets d'Instructions," cxiv. Inst.; and Bishop Hay's "Sincere Christian," vol. 2, chap. xxvi.

MATRIMONY.

"*For this cause a man shall leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife.*"—Gen. ii. 24.

Introduction.

On creating our first parents, God blessed them, and said to them: "*Increase and multiply, and fill the earth.*" Thus, from the beginning, God blessed the union of man and wife, and instituted marriage. Our Divine Lord, however, was pleased to raise this union to the dignity of a Sacrament, in order, &c. (here state reasons), and enlarge a little on the bounty of our Divine Lord in providing sacramental helps for a state having such important duties and such serious difficulties, &c.

Invite attention and invoke a blessing, observing, that happiness, not only for this life, but also for eternity, may be attached to the moment of passing from single to married life, &c.

Body of the Subject.

1. Define the Sacrament, and point out its end and purpose.

2. *The impediments*—what?—of two kinds: impediments of prohibition, and annulling impediments. State the effect of each, and then mention those of the first class; after which say: those of the second are more numerous, but that you will confine yourself to such as are of more general occurrence:—1st, consanguinity, stating to what degree; 2ndly, affinity, distinguishing affinity arising from lawful marriage, sinful intercourse, and spiritual affinity, and stating to what degree in each case; 3rdly, not being baptized; 4thly, want of freedom; 5thly, existing marriage; 6thly, espousals, and to what degree; 7thly, clandestinity; 8thly, abduction.

N.B.—With regard to each impediment, it will be necessary to put it into a case.

3. *The selection of a partner.*

Here observe that there is many a soul in heaven, who should be in hell, if he or she had made a different choice, and many a soul in hell on account of the choice they made. Recommend, therefore, earnest prayer. Quote "*House and riches are given by parents; but a prudent wife is properly from the Lord.*" (*Prov.* xix. 14). Recommend, also, the advice of parents; and, if there be no parents, that of trusty friends, observing, that no person, however wise in other respects, is fit to manage this matter of marriage for himself.

4. Having made a choice, to give notice in proper time to the Parish Priests on both sides, in order that the marriage may be published, or a dispensation procured.

5. To prepare by going to confession. Observe, that some prepare by a retreat of a few days, and make a general confession, the occasion being most favourable, when one is entering on a new and permanent state of life. Speak against unbecoming amusements in connection with the celebration of marriage, and everything at variance with the sanctity of the occasion.

Conclusion.

Conclude with general observations on the goodness of our Divine Lord in considering the duties and difficulties of married life, and providing means of grace with a view to them.

See Council of Trent, Catechism of Council; also consult Matrimony Treatise; Bishop Hay's "Sincere Christian;" and Guillet's "Projets d'Instructions." cxv., cxvi., cxvii. Insts

THE SACRAMENTALS.

"*As a father hath compassion on his children, so hath the Lord compassion on them that fear Him, for He knoweth our frame. He remembereth that we are dust.*"—Ps. cii. 13, 14.

Introduction.

God is to all mankind the Father of Mercies and the God of all Comfort, as the great Apostle of the Gentiles presents Him to us. We have reviewed the Sacraments, which are so many channels of mercy, and we have seen in them, that as a father in this world is solicitous for the welfare of his children in every stage of life, so our Divine Lord has instituted the Sacraments, that through them He might afford us the help we stand in need of, in the various stages of our spiritual life here on earth, with a view to that eternal life which awaits us beyond the grave. But He is rich in mercy and compassion, and, therefore, besides the Sacraments, He is pleased to employ additional means, of akin with these holy Institutions, to bestow His mercy upon us. These additional means are called Sacramentals, on account of their resemblance to the Sacraments properly so-called. It will, therefore, be in due course that, having treated of the Seven Sacraments, we should say something on the Sacramentals.

Behold, then, our subject, a subject of great importance, as we shall see in the course of the observations we are to make upon it. Let us, however, prepare ourselves for these observations by raising our thoughts on high, &c.

Body of the Subject.

1. Entering, therefore, upon our subject, we should, in the first place, understand what the *Sacramentals* mean in the general import of the expression. They mean certain acts, or things instituted, or consecrated by the Church, chiefly with a view to spiritual effects, and sometimes even with a view to temporal effects; and they are called Sacramentals, on account of a certain resemblance or affinity to the Sacraments. **Explain** this affinity, in what it consists, **showing** also the difference. **Add:** they are likewise so-called, because, according to

St. Thomas, they are dispositions or disposing means for the worthy reception of the Sacraments, by removing obstacles, and exciting fervour as we approach these channels of grace. *Explain* by examples.

2. The Sacramentals are chiefly six in number; namely, prayer, holy water, blessed bread, confession of sin, alms, and blessing. We have a few words to say upon each, but, before doing so, it may be desirable to point out their effects.

3. The effects are: 1st, a certain spiritual excitement of actual grace within us; 2ndly, a remission of sin; 3rdly, a relaxation of the temporal punishment due to sin; 4thly, the expelling and repressing of the devil; 5thly, certain benefits in the temporal order, such as health, prosperity in the concerns of this life, and the like. **Explain** each, as taught by Theology.

4. These being the general effects of the Sacramentals, we will return upon them to say something of each of them in particular; and

In the first place, we are to speak of prayer. By prayer as a Sacramental is chiefly understood the Lord's Prayer, and especially the words, "*Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us.*" These words going forth from the heart, and carrying with them a sentiment of contrition, are sure to obtain the remission of venial sin. "For our lesser sins," says St. Augustine, we strike our breast and say: "*Forgive us our trespasses,*" &c. Other penitential prayers, even in a mere ejaculatory form, have the same effect, as, for instance, when we strike our breasts and say, with the publican in the temple, "*God be merciful to me a sinner,*" or, "Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world," &c. Such petitions are sure to bring down the mercy of God upon us, and with it the remission of our venial sins.

The second of the Sacramentals we have mentioned is holy water, or rather the sprinkling of holy water. *Go on to say:* there is a mixture of salt in it, the water denoting the cleansing effect produced in the soul, according to the words used by the Church in sprinkling it: "*Thou shalt sprinkle me with hyssop, and I shall be cleansed: Thou shalt wash me, and I shall be made whiter than snow;*" whilst the salt indicates the freshness, in which the soul is preserved, in virtue of the blessing imparted. The salt and water are blessed separately, and then mixed, with a form of prayer, after which the Priest invokes a joint blessing

upon both combined. In these various blessings, the Church prays that Almighty God would impart a heavenly virtue to the holy water for driving away evil spirits, for removing diseases, and for banishing everything hurtful to the security and peace of wheresoever it is sprinkled by the invocation of His Holy Name. As he recites these prayers, the Priest makes the sign of the cross several times over the salt and water, and mixes them, using the same holy sign three times, and invoking, in doing so, the three Divine Persons of the Most Holy Trinity. The use of the sign of the cross should inspire great confidence in the efficacy of holy water.

This venerable sign has always been the Christian's shield "*from the face of the enemy.*" (See the Life of St. Anthony, 17th January. Quote the passage).

So much was the sign of the cross in use amongst Christians, and so well known its power against evil, that the Jews themselves, to whom the Mystery of the Cross was a stumbling-block, and the heathens, to whom it was folly, had recourse to it, when they found themselves in difficult emergencies. Even Julian the Apostate, that demon in human form, who undertook, in alliance with the devil, to overthrow the reign of Christ upon earth, had recourse to it in a great fright he brought upon himself. The fact is related by Theodoret, one of the Fathers of the Church.

See Butler on the devout use of the sign of the cross, Holy Week, where also see other facts. See also Scaramelli, vol. 2, secs. 397, 398.

As regards the Jews, a single fact will show how, in moments of danger or alarm, they used the sign of the cross. The fact is related by St. Gregory.

See Scaramelli, vol. 3, sec. 419; and tell only so much of the vision as relates to the sign of the cross.

Seeing, therefore, that the sign of the cross is such a protection against the devil, and seeing that the Church makes such use of this sacred sign in blessing holy water, it is no wonder that the Church attaches so much importance to the use of holy water by the faithful from the earliest ages. The Holy Fathers, and other authors worthy of faith, record several miracles wrought at different times and different places by means of holy water. (See Guillet's "Projets d'Instructions," cxix. Inst.)

The effects resulting from the pious use of holy water are set forth in the prayers used by the Church in blessing it, as already explained.

I have only to add another effect, which is common likewise to all the Sacramentals, viz., the remission of venial sin.

Encourage the use of holy water in various ways, as practised by good Christians.

5. **Explain** the other three, according to the doctrine of Theology, and as explained by Guillet in the above-mentioned Instruction.

Conclusion.

Conclude by saying, how rich God is in His bounty towards us—how, not content with giving us the Sacraments, He has provided for our constant use the kindred means of the Sacramentals. Let us bear them in mind. They are (here enumerate them again), after which exhort to the use of them, that they may help us in the combat we have to maintain against our spiritual enemies, and contribute to that victory which shall obtain for us the crown of immortal glory.

Consult Theology on the Sacramentals, also Guillet's "Projets d'Instructions," cxix. Inst.

PART V.

AN EXPOSITION OF CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE.

SPECIAL PREFACE

TO

PART V.

THE following Programmes on Christian Doctrine are designed to afford some assistance in explaining the Catechism not only to children, but to the faithful at large.

The word Catechism is of Greek origin, derived from the two words κατα and ηχον, and denotes a "viva voce," or verbal, instruction.

In this large sense, it may be said our Divine Lord Himself was the first Catechist, in the familiar and simple instructions He delivered to the people, as they flocked around Him to receive from His lips the words of eternal life. The Apostles continued the same mode of instruction, going about, according to His blessed example, and spreading everywhere the teachings they had received from their Divine Master. Thus St. Paul reminds the Ephesians in his farewell address to them, of how he unceasingly instructed them: "*You know*," said he, "*from the first day that I came into Asia, in what manner I have been with you, for all the time. . . . How I have kept back nothing that was profitable to you, but have preached it to you, and taught you publicly, and from house to house, testifying both to Jews and Gentiles, penance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.*" (*Acts* xx. 18, 20, 21). And, as he did himself, the blessed Apostle exhorted his beloved disciple Timothy, "*to preach the word: to be instant in season, out of season; reprove, entreat, rebuke in all patience and doctrine.* (2 *Tim.* iv. 2).

Elementary instruction, therefore, having a Divine origin, became traditional in the Church. But, in course of time, it

took what may be termed a technical form, and the Catechetical School of Jerusalem, under St. Cyril, and that of Alexandria under St. Clement and the celebrated Origen, occupy a prominent place in the history of the early ages of the Eastern Church.

In the West, the same mode of preaching the Word of God was not only practised by St. Augustine, but posterity is indebted to this great Doctor for a special treatise on the subject, under the title "de Catechizandis Rudibus," which bears testimony to his high sense of Catechetical instruction.

In times more modern, we find the most distinguished names associated with the work of teaching Catechism, making it a special ministry, as it became the function of a special rank in the gradation of "Holy Orders" in the Church.

The pious Gerson, justly termed "the most Christian Doctor," consecrated the evening of his life to this holy occupation, having resigned his high office of Chancellor of Paris on that account; and, like St. Augustine, he left after him a treatise he wrote, under the title of "de parvulis ad Christum trahendis;" in which, amongst other things, he said to those who thought he might find higher employment for his great talents and erudition: "You are like the disciples, who would keep away the little ones from our Divine Lord, as if it were unworthy of so great a Master to afford them His attention and caresses. But I would have you reflect on the words of the Evangelist, '*whom when Jesus saw He was much displeased, and saith to them: Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not. For of such is the kingdom of God.*' (*Mark* x. 14). In truth, I know nothing in the Church of God of greater importance than to plant and water, so to say, the souls of these 'little ones,' that Christ would vouchsafe to grant them the increase in the garden of His Church."

And, as in the case of this great light of his age, we find also in every age, men of apostolic zeal devoting their best energies to the evangelizing of the ignorant by Catechetical teaching.

St. Ignatius of Loyola practised it himself as a special exercise

of charity, and imposed it on the great Society of which he was the Founder, as a particular ministry to be maintained by his disciples.

St. Vincent de Paul, in the same way, exercised his great zeal for the salvation of souls in catechising the poor to the end of his life, and made it a prominent work of his Congregation, to be practised on their missions.

In quoting these examples, we cannot pass over the holy Bishop of Geneva, that great follower of our Divine Lord in meekness and charity. The authors of his life represent him to us seated on a throne, raised some four or five steps above the floor, in his Cathedral, surrounded with a little world of children; and it was a delightful scene to behold the great Prelate as he explained to them in the most homely way, the first rudiments of Christian Doctrine. He made himself a child amongst them, to form in them the interior and perfect man according to Christ, so that he could well say with the Apostle: "*We became little ones in the midst of you, as if a nurse should cherish her children; so desirous of you, we would gladly impart unto you not only the Gospel of God: but also our own souls because you were become most dear to us.*" (1 *Thess.* ii. 7, 8).

Catechetical teaching having been so highly appreciated and so zealously practised by illustrious Bishops and other great servants of God, we cannot be surprised to find this mode of instruction incorporated by the Church into her canonical legislation. The holy Council of Trent, having taken account of the matter in all its gravity, lays the obligation on all Bishops, in its twenty-fourth session, chap. iv., to see that Catechism be taught, *at least* on all Sundays and Holidays, in all the parishes of their respective dioceses, and to enforce the duty by ecclesiastical censures, if necessary; and several Pontiffs, more especially Clement XI., and Benedict XIV., have given all the weight of their supreme authority to the carrying out of the enactment. St. Charles Borromeo, in his various councils of the Church of Milan, made it an object of his particular solicitude; and passed a statute for having the Catechism taught

in the villages where, on account of weather, or the distance of the Church, the children could not be taught otherwise. Animated by the same spirit, Bishops in their diocesan synods, and statutes of their dioceses, have everywhere enacted most severe rules on the point, making it, in many instances, a matter of "ipso facto" suspension for a Priest, in care of souls, to be wanting to this duty twice in the same month.

From this zeal in the Church for Catechetical instruction, came these compilations of the rudiments of Christian Doctrine known familiarly under the title of Catechisms, from the purpose for which they have been drawn up, and the use to be made of them. They are various for different dioceses, but in substance they agree, being modelled on the Catechism of the Council of Trent; so that a Bishop, in adopting a form of Catechism for his own diocese, and putting it into the hands of his Clergy, gives effect, at least so far, to the decree of the Council of Trent on the subject, leaving to the clergy the full carrying of it out, they being in immediate relation and contact with the simple faithful.

In acquitting themselves of the grave duty thus imposed upon them, it would be a deplorable error for the Pastors of souls to seek to exonerate themselves of so heavy a responsibility, and cast it upon parents, school-teachers, or Christian Doctrine Confraternities. By all means they should avail themselves of all lay assistance, to have the children of their flock taught the words of the Catechism by rote, in order to store their memory, on its earliest development, with what may be termed the raw material, which, in after years, is to be worked up into intellectual and practical knowledge; but this manufacturing process must always remain an abiding and incommunicable obligation of the pastoral office. The necessity of actual faith, for every Christian soul on attaining the use of reason, should never be lost sight of by those who have undertaken the care of souls. Our Divine Lord has laid down the law, and it is distinct and positive, that "*he that believeth not shall be condemned*" (*Mark*

xvi. 16); and St. Paul is most express in teaching, that "*without faith it is impossible to please God.*" (*Heb.* xi. 6). Now, faith is not only subjective, it is objective as well, and it necessarily requires that all who have come to the use of reason must distinctly know, and distinctly believe, at least the elementary truths, or, as they are better known, the principal mysteries of religion.

Equally necessary for salvation is the observance of God's Commandments, from the very dawn of reason: "*If thou wilt enter into life, keep the Commandments.*" (*Matt.* xix. 17). This is the condition fixed and determined by our Saviour Himself.

It follows immediately from these two laws, as to faith and the observance of the Commandments of God, that a Pastor should be wanting in one of the most essential obligations of his charge, if he were to be content with a mere off-by-heart knowledge of the Catechism, on the part of the children of his parish, and so admit them to the Sacraments. "*He is a debtor*," as St. Paul would tell him, "*to the wise and the unwise*" alike of his flock (*Rom.* i. 14); and he owes it especially to the growing-up generation, to anticipate the rebellion of the passions of corrupt nature, by imparting to them a knowledge of their religion, from their tenderest years, which he is to accomplish by explaining and expounding to them the Christian Doctrine, as set forth in the Catechism.

But we commenced by saying the following Programmes are designed to be of help in expounding the Catechism, not only to children, but to the faithful at large. It would, indeed, be a very pernicious error to think, that this important function should be confined to children, and that it is unworthy of the Priest and people alike as a form of public instruction. As regards the Priest, he has the most brilliant examples to look back to, including our Divine Lord Himself, whose ordinary mode of instruction was what is required in the exposition of Christian Doctrine as contained in the Catechism. And what

subjects can a Christian Preacher treat of, more elevated than those which the pages of the Catechism place before him? Has he not in these pages a summary of the natural law, and the revealed positive law of God, as well as the teaching of the Church from the beginning? Do not these pages, few though they are, contain, in a condensed form, all he learned in his theological studies for years? and do they not open to him fields of study still, which his whole life will not suffice to travel over? Therefore, the matter of instruction presented in the Catechism cannot surely be complained of as being unworthy of the Preacher of God's Word, whatever may be his talents or his erudition. When it was observed to the learned and accomplished Gerson, to whose example we have already referred, that he might labour with more distinction for the salvation of souls, by a more solemn and dignified mode of preaching, he replied: "Yes, I might work with greater pomp and distinction, as you say, but not with greater fruit; *forte pomposius, sed non efficacius neque fructuosius.*"

Preaching the Word of God by the exposition of Catechism, has, moreover, the advantage of being an easy, or comparatively easy, mode of instruction. It draws but little on the inventive power of the Preacher, and he is additionally saved all trouble in the arrangement of what he has to say, having this done for him already in the order of the Catechism itself.

Another advantage which the exposition of Catechism affords consists in the connection and continuity of the instruction it imparts. Other forms of preaching present the truths and duties of religion in a detached way generally; whereas the Catechism pursues a regular series by which, as in a well-devised system of education, the Preacher leads his people through an orderly course of religious teaching.

It is a further great advantage to the Preacher, that in following the order of the Catechism, he can treat of vices as well as virtues, as they come before him in due course; and

he is relieved thereby from all solicitude in dealing with certain subjects which, either on account of their matter, his own susceptibilities, or those of his hearers, he might feel some difficulty in approaching.

As regards the faithful at large, so far from any objection to be apprehended from them, there is only too much reason to believe, this kind of instruction is absolutely necessary for many amongst them, whilst it is highly profitable to all.

As a matter of experience, it is found that there are men, and not a few, who, though enlightened on other subjects, and having the reputation of being highly educated, and accomplished members of society, are, nevertheless, deplorably ignorant of their religion, either from neglect in their youth, or forgetfulness or inattention to religious matters in riper years.

Others, there may be, who were instructed in their religion when growing up, but the instruction they received, or were capable of taking in, being only in accordance with their capacity, at the time, left large voids to be filled up, that have so remained since.

For these several classes, Catechetical instruction is necessary, and as they cannot be expected to range themselves with the children of the parish, to be taught along with them, their ignorance can be met only by the mode of instruction under consideration, whilst it may be also added, that they have now attained that degree of mental development, which entitles them to have "*the mystery of the Kingdom of God*" unfolded to them in all its fulness.

But, beyond the classes we have just taken account of, the exposition of the Catechism is highly useful for the body of the faithful at large. In the matter of religion, simple knowledge is by no means sufficient. We require, moreover, to be reminded, from time to time, of what we know, and to have it inculcated and impressed upon us, that we may see how far our

lives are in conformity with the standard of Christian virtue, and correct and amend our manners accordingly.

In fine, it is a fact testified by constant experience, that the faithful, however well instructed, feel particular satisfaction in finding that their knowledge is in accord with the authorised teaching of religion, and they make no secret of this sentiment, as they take it with them from a simple exposition of the Catechism when well done.

The qualities to be kept in view in the solemn explanation of the Catechism are chiefly, strict correctness of doctrine, a clear and precise mode of expression, and an interesting manner, including, as a matter of course, the religious earnestness essential to every form of preaching.

In fixing his manner, the Preacher must come down from the high solemnity required by the more formal mode of preaching, and make himself in a manner quite at home with his audience, so as to put them quite at ease in listening to him.

He presents himself, Catechism in hand, announces the Lesson, and proceeds in the order of question and answer, explaining both, as he goes along.

Occasionally, he should call attention to points of more than ordinary importance, and intersperse here and there a word of pious sentimentality, to stir up the religious feelings of his hearers.

He should avail himself of comparisons and illustrations for clearing up matters that might be otherwise obscure; and with the same view he would find it frequently useful to put the questions in the form of cases or examples, investing them thereby with a life-like actuality.

A well-selected anecdote, from time to time, embodying the instruction he desires to convey, if gracefully told, has a very happy effect, and, by being remembered, preserves the fruit of the instruction.

It would be well, towards the end, to recapitulate the answers,

in a continuous recital, or in equivalent terms, and to conclude with some words of exhortation suggested by the subject-matter of the Lesson or some portion of it.

Coming back to children, it may be of use to say a few words as to the method the Catechist is to observe in expounding the Catechism to them, apart from the rest of the faithful.

It is to be supposed that his little hearers know already by heart the part of the Catechism he undertakes to explain to them; and his first care should be to gauge, as accurately as possible, their capacity, in order to adapt himself thereto, and by that means spare himself and them such explanations as would be above their reach, according to the example of our Divine Lord, who, speaking to His disciples, said to them: "*I have yet many things to say to you; but you cannot bear them now.*" (*John* xvi. 12).

However, in exercising this prudent discretion, he is to recollect that the youthful intelligences he is dealing with are susceptible of expansion and development, and he should endeavour to expand and develop them more and more, from day to day, so that by degrees they may cease to be subjects "*for milk*" merely, and "*may become able for meat.*" (1 *Cor.* iii. 2). This is the process of all teaching and learning, proceeding "*a magis noto ad minus notum.*"

Taking with him these principles, the Catechist should break to his "little ones" the bread of life, by explaining every word, and simplifying every idea, both of question and answer, so far as he can find access to their understandings and hearts, so that the reproach may not be his, "*the little ones have asked for bread, and there was none to break it unto them.*" (*Lam. Jer.* iv. 4).

He is to attach all importance to repetitions. The artisan does not drive home the nail but by repeated strokes of the hammer. So, likewise, the Catechist is to hammer home his explanations by frequently repeating them to his juvenile auditors, according to the maxim, "*The words of the wise are as nails deeply fastened in.*" (*Eccles.* xii. 11). Sometimes he would

do well to repeat in one form of words, and sometimes in another, to make his little people take in the sense all the better; as repeating the same thing, in the same words, would lead very likely to more attention being paid to words than to their meaning.

But, it is in interrogating them, and making them answer his questions, that the Catechist is to place his chief hope of success. In putting his questions, he must resort to various contrivances, in order to maintain attention at its fullest stretch of earnestness, and hold all minds hanging upon his lips.

Sometimes he might address the questions to them all, saying, "All that can will answer the question I am going to put;" and, as he will have received their answers in a confused sound of voices, he might say: "You have answered the question, as I have heard you, but I am not sure that each and every one of you has answered it correctly; let me ask some of you to answer by himself. Now, therefore [*name*] how do *you* answer the question? I will repeat it for you." He is then to ask the question of several individually, thereby repeating it, and getting a repetition of the answer likewise.

At another time, he may say: "I am going to ask you a question, and no one will answer it; but all who can answer it, will hold up their hands, when they will have heard it." Then, seeing hands uplifted, he might say: "Very well, all that hold up their hands think they know the answer; but let us see; [*name*] do you speak out, and answer." And, asking several in the same way, and correcting them as far as may be necessary, he secures again the advantage of repetition.

At another time still, he might call on an individual here and there, and so far as they make mistakes, he might call upon others to answer correctly, saying a complimentary word to those who do so.

In this way he is to proceed through the questions and answers in order, adhering to the words, and explaining such of them

as may seem to need explanation, at the same time that he is to simplify both question and answer so far as he may consider necessary for the intelligences he has to deal with.

Having gone over the task of the day in this way, he would do well to return upon it, in order to convey the sense and meaning of it, independently of the words of the text. In doing so, he might premise, in each case of question and answer, a few words of explanation from himself in the first place. In the second place, he might ask the question in different but equivalent words. Thirdly, he should divide the question, if a complex one, into its component parts. Fourthly, he should introduce simple illustrations now and then, to give a material form to subjects difficult to be understood, otherwise, by young and uncultivated minds; and lastly, he should make a pious observation here and there, in order to maintain the religious character of the function, as he goes along.

The exterior manner of the Catechist counts for much in the instruction of children. By all means, he should maintain order in the little flock he has around him; but this he should do in so amiable a manner as to make it a pleasure to them to come about him, and give him their heart and mind whilst he instructs them. So far, therefore, from any harshness, or unkindness of any sort, his countenance should beam forth gladness and delight at seeing himself surrounded with these favourites of heaven; and, as he speaks to them individually or collectively, his accents should be the breathings of love and sweetness, so that, as the Psalmist expresses it, they may feel "*how sweet his words are to their palate, more than honey to their mouth*" (*Ps.* cxviii. 103), as they repeat and rehearse their Catechist's instructions. But, whilst making himself amiable in this way, and familiar, the Catechist should not allow the religious character of the exercise to be lost sight of. He should, therefore, in his explanations and anecdotes that he may relate, as also in his manner and dealing with his youthful audience, avoid all that

would be unseemly or ridiculous, keeping in view the character of the population, rather than the examples of other countries, where, on account of a difference in the manners of the inhabitants, one might be more free to relax the gravity and seriousness suitable to our people.

Before dismissing his little hearers, he would find it very useful to relate to them some religious anecdote, which he would require of them to repeat at next meeting. It might be some of the Mysteries of religion, such as the Birth of our Divine Lord, the Resurrection, Ascension, &c., and it would be all the better, if it were connected with what had been the matter of the instruction he had been treating of.

AN EXPOSITION OF CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE.

LESSON I.

ON GOD AND THE CREATION OF THE WORLD.

Q. The Catechism begins by asking, "Who made the world?" **Observe:** This question is forced on every human being as soon as he comes to the use of reason, and looks around him, to behold this world and the various objects it presents to his view.

A. All mankind have but one answer to give to the question. They all say it was God. They may have different names for Him, according to their different languages, but all these names signify what we mean by the word "God." Thus have we our minds lifted up from the visible things of this world to God the great Being who made them, according to the words of St. Paul, who says, that "*the invisible things of God*," that is, God Himself, "*are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made.*" (*Rom.* i. 20).

Q. From thus telling us it was God that made the world, the Catechism proceeds to ask: "Who is God?" and it replies:

A. That "He," the God who made the world, "is the Creator and Sovereign Lord of heaven and earth, and all things." **Observe:** The word "Creator" to be explained as different from maker, the difference to be shown by examples. "Lord," to be explained so as to represent God's dominion over all creation, in preserving it and ruling over it. The word "Sovereign" to be explained as representing Him as above all other beings, being "*King of kings and Lord of lords.*" (*Apoc.* xix. 16). Heaven and earth to be explained by saying, nothing is excepted from His dominion in heaven above, on earth below, &c. Therefore, the prophet invites all creatures to bless the Lord, saying: "*All ye works of the Lord,*" *&c.* (*Dan.* iii. 57 to 99).

Q. Having thus given us some idea of God as Creator, &c., the Catechism asks: "How many Gods are there?" This

question is asked not only to give occasion to assert what religion teaches, but also what reason itself insists upon, that there is only one God, and also to assert this fundamental truth in contradiction to the false doctrines of Pagans and Idolaters, who pretend there are several gods, or deities. The question also makes room for stating that God, who is one, "will also reward the good, and punish the wicked," being our Supreme Judge.

Q. The next question respecting God is, "Where is God?" We answer:

A. "Everywhere," and then we add, "He is said principally to be in heaven," and the reason for saying so is, "because in heaven He manifests Himself to the blessed." **Observe:** "Everywhere," and **explain, quoting** (*Ps.* cxxxviii. 8); but whilst thus everywhere by His existence, by His power and by His knowledge, He is, nevertheless, said principally "to be in heaven." **State** why, and **explain** the word "manifests," and mention who are the blessed, **enumerating** the nine choirs of angels with the Blessed Virgin above them all, after which **enumerate** the Patriarchs and Saints of the Old Law, ending with the Apostles, &c., of the New Law.

Q. Heaven being thus the special abode of God, we are naturally led to inquire, "What is heaven?"

A. It is answered, "The kingdom of God's glory, and of His angels and saints." **Observe:** Thus the Catechism would lift up our hearts and souls above this world to contemplate Almighty God reigning in heaven, and His angels and saints around His throne of glory. This vision He discloses to us by His prophet. (*Dan.* vii. 9, &c.; also *Apoc.* iv. i. &c.)

Q. Returning to the answer, "God is everywhere," the Catechism asks, "Why do we not see Him?"

A. The reason is a very simple one: "Because God is a pure spirit having no body, and therefore cannot be seen by us in this life." **Observe:** We can see only material things such as (*exempli gratia*), but there are other things even material, which we cannot see, such as the wind, much less can we see *immaterial* or spiritual things, and consequently God being a pure spirit, we cannot see Him with these eyes of our body.

Q. Well, then, if we cannot see God in this world, we are asked if "God sees us?"

A. We are answered: "That He does see us and continually watches over us." **Observe:** That being everywhere and conse-

quently always present to us, He constantly beholds and continually watches over us. His eyes are upon us as we go out, as we come in, as we are asleep, as well as when awake, and He never loses sight of us for a single moment.

Q. For further explanation we are asked, "If God knows all things?" for, seeing is one thing, and knowing another.

A. The Catechism tells us most distinctly that He knows not only what comes to open view in our conduct, but even "our most secret thoughts and actions," quoting the words of St. Paul, "*all things are naked and open to His eyes*," even our most secret thoughts and actions. (*Heb.* iv. 13). **Infer** how blind poor mortals are, making no account of the thoughts of their minds, as if God did not see them, and in seeking the darkness of night, or the loneliness of solitude to perpetrate deeds of darkness, as if the eyes of God were not open to behold them at all times and in all places.

Q. Well, then, God seeing us not only exteriorly but our inmost thoughts and the deepest secrets of our hearts, the question arises: "Will He judge these secret thoughts and inward operations for reward and punishment?"

A. The Catechism leaves no doubt upon the matter, asserting positively "Yes," and it adds in our Saviour's words, "*Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall render an account for it in the day of judgment.*"

Q. Having said so much about God being everywhere, and seeing all things, the Catechism goes on to inquire, "If He had a beginning," that is, if there was a time when God did not exist. **Observe:** There was a time when there was neither sun, moon, &c., and naturally we are led to ask, if there was a time when there was no God?

A. The answer of the Catechism distinctly says: That God "always was, and that He will always be."

Q. Thus informing us of God existing without a beginning and without end, from eternity to eternity, the Catechism would ask, "Can God do all things?" in order to give us an idea of His power; and it says:

A. "Yes, He can do all things," as our Saviour Himself teaches, saying: "*With God all things are possible*," and nothing is difficult to Him.

Q. To show how nothing can be difficult to God it asks, "How did God make the world?" this wonderful fabric, the sun, moon, and stars, &c., and it replies:

A. 1st, That He made the world out of nothing: 2ndly, That He made it by His word only, and then the Catechism explains that His word means "a single act of His all-powerful will." **Observe:** 1st, What it is to make a thing out of *nothing* by contrast with the works of men, who must always have something to work upon to make anything. 2ndly, In the great works of creation, how that all God had to do was to issue His command, to speak the word according to (*Ps.* xxxii. 9). 3rdly, The word was a single act of His will.

Proceed to give a detail of the Work of the six days, **showing as you go along** God's omnipotence. 1st, In the wonderful works of creation. 2ndly, In creating them by a single act of His will.

Q. In fine, the first chapter of the Catechism concludes by asking for what end or purpose, or "Why did God make the world?" For He must have a reason for making it, and that must be worthy of Himself, His supreme wisdom and majesty.

A. The Catechism answers: that "He made the world for two purposes, the first being His own glory, and to show His power and majesty, and secondly for man's use and benefit." **Observe:** The first purpose was one God can never dispense with, His own glory, on which account **quote** (*Prov.* xvi. 4). The second purpose is man's, that is, our use and benefit.

CONCLUSION.

Sum up all the answers in a continuous narrative, and **end** with words of admiration of God and the works of His hands, saying: "*Thou art worthy*," *&c.* (*Apoc.* iv. 11.)

LESSON II.

ON MAN, AND THE END OF MAN.

Q. The second lesson of the Catechism begins by asking, "What is man?" **Observe:** The first chapter ended by saying, that God created the world for man's use and benefit, besides His own glory, and, naturally, the Catechism, in order to teach us what sort of a being man is, asks the question, "What is man?" and answers:

A. "One of God's creatures, composed of body and soul, and made to God's own likeness." **Observe:** In this answer, we have three ideas put before us respecting man. 1st. That he is one of God's creatures, that is, that he is a being created by God. 2ndly. That he is composed of two substances, a body and a soul. These two substances are very unlike each other, the body consisting of flesh and blood, like the beasts of the field, requiring eating and drinking for its support, like them, and served with organs like theirs, for the purpose of seeing, hearing, tasting, smelling, and touching like them, and to die in course of time like them also. But the soul is the noble part of man, raising him immeasurably above the brute creation, and making him lord and master of this world, according to God's own words. (*Ps.* viii. 8, 9, 10). 3rdly. So ennobled is man in his creation, that he is like to God Himself. **Here give an account** of the creation of our first parents, as in Genesis, after which **observe:** that having thus created the first man and woman, He instituted the laws of generation, whereby the human race was to be propagated, and the earth to be populated. **Quote** *Gen.* i. 28.

Q. The Catechism returning upon the point, that man was made to the likeness of God, asks the question, in what part of him, whether in body or soul, is he like to God, and having answered, that it is in the soul, it further asks, in what, or how, is our soul like to God? and replies:

A. "In being a spirit and immortal, and being capable of knowing and loving God." **Observe:** Our soul is like to God: 1st, because it is a spirit, as God is a spirit; 2ndly, in being immortal as God is immortal; and 3rdly, in being capable of knowing God and loving Him, by which means our souls reflect God as in a mirror, and as He looks upon them, He sees His own image in them, as we see ourselves in a looking-glass.

Q. Returning upon the word "immortal," the Catechism asks, "What do you mean, when you say the soul is immortal?" and answers:

A. That the soul is immortal, inasmuch as it can never die. In death it parts with the body, and goes on to live in another state of existence, and will live as long as God will be God.

Q. The next question we are asked, "Why did God give us souls capable of knowing and loving Him?" **Observe:** God does nothing without having a purpose in view, and therefore the

Catechism asks, why, that is for what purpose, "did God give us souls capable of knowing and loving Him?" and answers:

A. "That we might fulfil the ends for which He made us." **Observe:** God always adapts the means He employs to the end He purposes to Himself in all His works; hence having destined us for a certain end, He has given us a soul capable of knowing and loving Him, in order to attain that end.

Q. Then comes the question, "What is the end for which He made us?" and the answer tells us very distinctly:

A. That "He made us to know, love, and serve Him here on earth, and after this to see and enjoy Him for ever in heaven." **Observe:** Here is the noble end or destiny of man, to know, love, and serve God here on earth, and after this to see and enjoy Him for ever in heaven. The sun was made to send down its heat and light upon the world. This was the end for which God made that great luminary, and according to that end it sends down its light and heat upon us. (**Other illustrations**). So, likewise, God has made us for the high and holy end of knowing, loving, and serving Him here, and after this life, of enjoying and seeing Him for ever in heaven. We see we have a double end in the design of our great Creator, one for this world, and one for the world to come. In this world our end is to know, love, and serve Him, and thereby we render ourselves worthy of our end in the world to come, which is to see God and enjoy Him for ever in heaven. How holy, therefore, is our destiny here below, but how glorious in the world to come, to see God face to face, to see Him and enjoy Him in heaven, the kingdom of His glory, and to see and enjoy Him for ever. O, should we not live so as to attain that end? But alas! how many are there who degrade themselves from their high destiny, and live the life of brute animals here on earth, of whom the Psalmist complains. (*Ps.* xlviii. 13).

Q. One of the ends, or rather a part of the end in this world, for which God made us, is to know Him; therefore the Catechism asks the very important question: "How can we know God on earth?" and answers:

A. That we can know Him "by learning the truths He Himself has taught us." **Observe:** In other, words God Himself is our Master and Instructor, teaching us in various ways, as the Apostle says: "*God who, at sundry times and in divers manners, spoke in times past to the Fathers,*" *&c.* (*Heb.* i. 1).

This is what we call revelation. God inspired particular men, and they thereby became instructors on the part of God to mankind, God speaking to us through them. Finally, He spoke to us through our Saviour, His only Son, who came down from heaven, became man, and spent thirty-three years in visible form as man to teach us how we are to know God. What God revealed to us by His prophets, and other holy men, and what our Divine Saviour taught during His stay upon earth, is committed to the Church for our instruction, and thus we are divinely taught through the Church how we are to know God, "by learning the truths He Himself has taught us."

Q. Then the Catechism asks, "Where shall we find those truths?" and answers:

A. "They are chiefly contained in the Apostles' Creed." **Observe:** How the Apostles, as it is thought, before they separated, put together a number of truths, the principal truths they had learned from our Divine Lord Himself. These truths are twelve in number, corresponding to the number of the Apostles, each of them, as it is said, contributing an article. Hence they are called the Apostles' Creed; they are also called the symbol of the Apostles, that is, a standard of Faith, by the profession and teaching of which the Apostles were to maintain and transmit the same Faith to mankind. This symbol or standard contains only the chief or principal truths or mysteries of the Christian Faith. The following chapter treats of it.

Conclusion.

Recapitulate the preceding answers, and add some words on man's dignity, on account of his high and glorious destiny, exhorting to a life in conformity with it.

LESSON III.

ON THE APOSTLES' CREED.

Q. The third lesson or chapter of the Catechism opens by asking, "What does the Apostles' Creed contain?"

A. The answer is "The principal mysteries of religion, and other necessary articles;" and then follows the question:

Q. "What are the principal mysteries?" to which the Catechism replies:

A. "The Unity and Trinity of God, the Incarnation, Death and Resurrection of our Saviour."

Q. Then follows the question: "Why are these called principal mysteries?" The answer is:

A. "Because they are most necessary to be explicitly believed, and because all other mysteries of religion are grounded on them." Observe: There are two reasons given for calling these mysteries "principal," the first of which is, because they are most necessary to be *explicitly* believed. When the Catechism says "necessary" in reference to these mysteries, we must distinguish two ways in which a thing may be necessary for salvation. One would be by a *necessity of means*, so that there could be no going to Heaven without it, and no excuse could be of any avail in the case. The other would be by a *necessity of precept*, so as to leave room for an excuse in certain cases. Now, applying this distinction to the mysteries enumerated, some would say, that they are all necessary to be *explicitly* believed for salvation, and necessary by a *necessity of means*, so as to admit no excuse whatever in any human being who has come to the use of reason. There are others who are not so strict. They would make a distinction in the mysteries in question, and would say only some of them are necessary by a *necessity of means*, whilst others are necessary by a *necessity of precept*, but a precept, they would tell us, so rigorous, as scarcely to admit of any excuse. Hence, as salvation cannot be exposed to any risk, parents should take the greatest pains to have their children taught all these mysteries without distinction, at the first dawn of their reason. The second reason given for calling

these mysteries "principal" is: "because all other mysteries of religion are grounded on them." A building is grounded on its foundation, and cannot stand without it, so the Christian religion is grounded on these mysteries as its foundation, and cannot exist without them.

But the Catechism says of these mysteries, not only that they are to be believed, but to be believed *explicitly*. Hence we are to inquire what is meant by this word "explicitly." We come at its meaning by contrasting it with *implicitly*, which has an opposite signification, and may be explained thus: if I say, I believe in all the truths the Church teaches, though I do not know them all, I believe *implicitly* in those I do not know, but if there be question of any truths that I do know, I believe in such truths *explicitly; explicit* belief requiring distinct knowledge of what I believe, whilst *implicit* belief does not require such knowledge. Therefore when we say that we are required to believe the principal mysteries of religion *explicitly*, we mean, that we must have a distinct knowledge of them, and so believe them.

And mysteries besides being revealed are of such a character that we cannot comprehend them even with the aid of revelation. How are we to understand this? We must distinguish, and say: That *knowing* a truth is one thing, and *comprehending* it is another, and we may know many things, and yet not be able to comprehend them; thus, for example, we know we have a body and soul united in our personality: this we know beyond all doubt; but *how they are united*, this we cannot comprehend. Applying this distinction to the mysteries of religion, we *know them*, as *they are revealed*, but *to comprehend them*, that is, to understand *how they are so*, this is above the reach of our mind or understanding.

Q. But, speaking about mysteries, the Catechism would ask us: "What we mean by mysteries of religion?" and would have us answer:

A. "Revealed truths which we cannot comprehend." Observe: The Catechism does not say simple *truths*, but *revealed* truths, that is, truths which God Himself has declared, and are taught us by the Church as coming from Him, for there are various other truths, natural truths, or truths we come at by our own reason; but the mysteries of religion are revealed, or Divine truths which our reason could never discover by itself unaided by revelation.

Q. But then it may be asked, and the Catechism asks the question: "Does God require of us to believe mysteries of religion?" though we do not comprehend them, and it not only answers:

A. "Yes," but adds the reason, saying, "that He requires of us to pay the homage, that is, the service of our understanding, and submit our will to Him in all things." **Observe**: God is our Supreme Lord and Master, and has therefore a claim on all the faculties of our mind, as well as all the senses of our body. Now in our minds we possess the faculties of our understanding and will, therefore He has a right to the service of both.

Q. To clear up this matter still more, we are asked, "How we pay the homage of our understanding to God," and we are told:

A. That we do this "By firmly believing on God's unerring word, whatever He has revealed, be it ever so incomprehensible to us." **Observe**: A person tells us a fact, we do him honour by believing him on his word. So likewise God tells a mystery, we believe Him, and thereby do Him honour. But we not only believe Him, but we believe *firmly*, and we believe Him though we do not comprehend what He tells us, thus doing Him more honour still, by the greater reliance we place in His words, believing He cannot be deceived Himself, nor can He deceive us, being infinitely wise, and infallibly truthful. Thus it is, that, according to the words of the Apostle, "*We bring our understanding into captivity unto the obedience of Christ*" (2 *Cor.* x. 5.)

Q. As to the will, another great faculty of the mind, we are asked: "How we submit it to God?" and we reply:

A. "By cheerfully doing, in obedience to God, all things whatsoever He commands." **Observe**: He is Lord and Master, we are His servants. It is our duty to obey Him, and to do so cheerfully, and in all things. By doing so, we submit our will to His Divine Majesty.

Q. The chapter ends by asking: "What means the Unity of God?" which is one of the principal mysteries, and is at the head and front of the rest, and it answers:

A. That the Unity of God means: "That there is but one God, and that there cannot be more Gods than one." **Observe**: The idolaters fancied several gods. But the true religion has always taught, and, even without revelation at all, man's reason

is capable of demonstrating, that there is but one God, and that more gods than one are an impossibility.

Q. And the Catechism asks: "Why cannot there be more Gods than one?" and answers:

A. "Because God, being the Supreme and Sovereign Lord, cannot have an equal." **Observe:** He who is first cannot have another first along with Him. He who is above all others can have no one on a level with Himself. Therefore, God being first, and before all other beings, and being supreme, or above all other beings, can have no equal, that is, there can be no second God, much less can there be several Gods.

Conclusion.

Sum up the several answers in succession, and end with some pious observations upon mysteries, quoting the words of St. Paul (*Rom.* xi. 33, 34, 35, 36).

LESSON IV.

ON THE TRINITY AND THE INCARNATION.

Q. The fourth lesson of the Catechism treats of the two fundamental Mysteries of the Trinity and Incarnation; and, beginning with the Trinity, asks, "How many Persons are there in God?" **Observe:** As there is but one God, human reason left to itself would naturally say there is but one person in God.

A. The Catechism guards against this mistake, informing us that there are three Persons in God, though He is but one God; and adds that these three Divine Persons are really distinct, one from another, and are equal in all things.

Q. Then the Catechism asks for the names of these three Divine Persons, and tells us they are:

A. "The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost."

Q. And to enlighten us more fully respecting these three Divine Persons, we are asked, respecting each, if He be God, and are answered distinctly:

A. "Yes," and are told, at the same time, the order which they hold with respect to each other, so that the Father is the first Person, the Son the second Person, and the Holy Ghost the third.

Q. These questions and answers respecting the three Persons of the Blessed Trinity prepare us for the question: "What means the Blessed Trinity" itself? the answer to which is:

A. "One God in three Divine Persons," or, as it may be otherwise defined, three Divine Persons in one God.

Q. But as each of the three Divine Persons is God, it might be asked are there not, therefore, three gods? The Catechism, guarding against such an error, asks the question: "Are the three Divine Persons three Gods?" and answers emphatically:

A. "No;" and explains that they are only one God, and adds the reason, "because they have but one and the same Divine nature;" and it further adds "that they are from eternity," to prevent the idea of any of them being older, or younger, before, or after another in existence.

Q. But it might occur to us to think whether any of the three Divine Persons be more powerful, or more wise, or in any way more perfect than another, and, therefore, the Catechism puts the question: "Is any of the three Divine Persons more powerful or more wise than another?" and replies:

A. "No; no one of the three Divine Persons is more powerful, more wise, or more perfect, in any way, than another," the reason being, as the Catechism explains: "As the three Divine Persons are all but one and the same God, they must be alike in all Divine perfections; therefore, one cannot be more powerful or more wise than the other." **Observe:** The difficulty, or rather the impossibility, of comprehending the Mystery of the Blessed Trinity consists in this, that we cannot get into our mind what seems to be a contradiction, three in one, and one in three, three Persons in one God, and one God in three Persons. To give some sort of a glimpse of this difficulty, examples are presented to us. We are told that our great and glorious Apostle, in order to explain it to the Court of Tara, stooped down and plucked up a shamrock, and, pointing to it, said: "Here are three in one, and one in three—three leaves in the one herb, and one herb in three leaves." Again, the human mind is referred to. The Scripture tells us, that after God had made everything else in this world, when about making man, said, the

Father speaking to the two other Divine Persons: "*Let us make man to our own image and likeness.*" Now, this image and likeness is in the soul we have within us, and what do we discover in point of fact in our souls? One in three, and three in one. We have but one soul, yet in that one soul we have three distinct faculties: the memory, the understanding, and the will. Again, the triangle is brought forward. In it we have three in one, and one in three: three angles in one figure, and one figure in three angles. But these examples give us only a glimpse of the great mystery, and leave us yet to say with the Apostle: "*O the depth of the riches of the wisdom and of the knowledge of God! How incomprehensible are His judgments, and how unsearchable His ways!*" (*Rom.* xi. 33).

Anecdote: It is related of St. Augustine, that, as he was walking along the sea-shore, and thinking if he could understand the Mystery of the Trinity, he met a little child forming a hole in the sand with a sea-shell, and, having asked him what he was doing, the child replied, "I am making a hole in the sand to drain the sea into it." "O foolish little boy," said the Saint, "how could you do a thing so impossible?" "Impossible!" said the child; "let me tell you, that what you are thinking of is far more impossible—to collect the incomprehensible Mystery of the Blessed Trinity into your head;" saying which he disappeared. He was an angel sent by God to the Saint, to admonish him of the impossibility of understanding the great mystery. Whereupon, humbling himself, and captivating his understanding in obedience to the teaching of Faith, he was satisfied, thenceforth, to believe the mystery with the simplicity of a child taking its lesson from its parents or instructors.

Q. From speaking of the Blessed Trinity the Catechism comes to speak of the Incarnation, and asks the question: "Did one of the three Divine Persons become man?" and answers:

A. "Yes; God the Son, the second Divine Person, became man." **Observe:** Thus we are put on our guard against saying, that God the Father, the first Person, or God the Holy Ghost, the third Person, became man. It was the Son, the second Person, that became man. In speaking of this mystery, St. Paul says: "*For let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God. But emptied himself, taking the form of a servant,*

being made in the likeness of man, and in habit found as a man." (*Phil.* ii. 5, 6, 7).

Q. The Catechism, to explain this great mystery, goes on to ask, "How did God the Son become man?" and answers:

A. "He was conceived by the Holy Ghost, and born of the Virgin Mary. **(Here recite the account of the Annunciation.** (*Luke* i. 26, *et seq.*)

Q. For further explanation of the Incarnation, the Catechism asks, "What do you mean by saying that the Son of God was conceived by the Holy Ghost?" and replies:

A. I mean, "that He assumed human nature, that is a body and soul like ours by the operation of the Holy Ghost." **Observe:** This is what the Angel Gabriel announced to the Blessed Virgin. She trembled for her virginity. But the Archangel told her she had nothing to fear on that score, saying, "*The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee. And, therefore, also the Holy, which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God.*" (*Luke* i. 35).

Q. The Catechism further asks, "Where did God the Son take a body and soul like ours?" and answers:

A. That it was "in the chaste womb of the Virgin Mary, and He was born of her," she furnishing from herself alone, by a miraculous operation, the body assumed by the eternal Son of God in becoming man, without any detriment to her sacred virginity, which she would not forfeit or forego, even to become the mother of an Incarnate God.

Q. God the Son, becoming man, takes a new name, and therefore the Catechism asks, "How do you call God the Son made man?" and answers:

A. "Jesus Christ," and explains the meaning of the name, saying that "Jesus signifies Saviour, and Christ signifies anointed;" and adds the remarkable words from St. Paul, "*that in the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, of those that are in heaven, on earth, and under the earth.*" (*Phil.* ii. 10). **Observe:** That the name Jesus came from Heaven, being brought by the Angel Gabriel. "*Behold thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and shalt bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus.*" (*Luke* i. 31).

Q. With a view to further explanation, the Catechism asks: "If, when becoming man, Jesus Christ remained God?"

Observe: He lived amongst mankind as one of themselves in all things, as St. Paul says, "*like as we are without sin*" (*Heb.* iv. 15), so much so that His neighbours said of Him, "*Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not His mother called Mary, and His brethren James, and Joseph, and Simon, and Jude.*" (*Matt.* xiii. 55). It is not, therefore, without reason it is asked, "Did Jesus remain God when He became man?"

A. The answer is distinct, saying, "Yes. He always was God," even when in the form of man.

Q. The Catechism then asks, "Was Jesus Christ always man," and answers:

A. "No; only from the time of His Conception or Incarnation." In His Conception or Incarnation, three things took place. First, a most perfect body was formed within the ever chaste womb of the Blessed Virgin. Secondly, a most perfect soul was created, at the same moment, by the power of God; and thirdly, at the same moment, too, both were united to each other, and to the second Person of the adorable Trinity.

Q. From the foregoing questions we are prepared to be asked, "What means the Incarnation?" and we answer:

A. "That God the Son, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, was made man." **Observe:** But we must understand this, not as if the Divinity of the Son of God was converted into man, but by His assuming human nature, and uniting it to His Divine nature without any mixing or blending of the substance of one with the substance of the other, but uniting both in one person, so that as *our* soul and body make but the one man, so, likewise, God the Son, and the human soul and human body He united to Himself in the Incarnation, became the same Christ.

Q. This great mystery must have a reason, and a reason worthy of God, and therefore the Catechism very properly asks, "Why did God the Son become man?" and answers:

A. "To redeem and save us;" and then follows the question:

Q. "How did Christ redeem and save us?" and the question is answered:

A. "By His sufferings and death on the cross." **Observe:** Whenever we look at a crucifix, that great emblem of religion tells us how He redeemed and saved us.

Q. The chapter comes to a close by asking, "Was it by His

Passion and Death also Christ satisfied the justice of God for our sins?" and replies:

A. "Yes, and delivered us from hell and from the power of the devil." **Observe:** We shall see in the next chapter how we had offended God's majesty, how we rendered ourselves liable to everlasting perdition, and had fallen under the power of the devil, but by taking human nature upon Him, and thereby rendering Himself capable of suffering, and by actually suffering for us, a most painful and ignominious death, the death of the cross, our Divine Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, delivered us from all these misfortunes and evils, and at the same time appeased the justice of the Eternal Father for us.

CONCLUSION.

Recapitulate and add some words to excite admiration and gratitude to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, for the mystery of the Incarnation.

LESSON V.

ON OUR FIRST PARENTS.

Q. The preceding chapter ended by saying, that our Saviour by dying for us on the cross, delivered us from the power of the devil, and, therefore, this fifth chapter opens by asking, "How came we into the power of the devil?" and makes answer:

A. "By the disobedience of our first parents in eating the forbidden fruit." (*Gen.* ii. & iii.) **(Here give the history of the fall** as in *Gen.* ii. & iii., and **observe).** Thus was it, that our first parents disobeyed the order of God in eating of the forbidden fruit. We, their posterity, from the first to the last, were involved in their disobedience, and, therefore, in their punishment. How this is we cannot sufficiently tell. It is a mystery, but though we cannot unravel it, we are bound to adore it, and believe that it is sovereignly just and equitable. The Blessed Virgin alone escaped, she being preserved by a singular privilege, as being destined to be the Mother of a God incarnate.

Q. Having mentioned our first parents, the Catechism asks: "Who were our first parents?" and answers, as we all know:

A. "Adam and Eve, the first man and woman." **Observe:** There are over ten hundred millions of inhabitants on the surface of the earth, and this is but one generation out of all the generations that have gone before us, and are to come after us, and every man, woman, and child of these generations, generation after generation, had, and have, and shall have, till the end of time, to look back to Adam and Eve, the first man and woman, as the common parents from whom they are all descended.

Q. The Catechism proceeds to ask: "Why did God command our first parents not to eat the forbidden fruit?" The answer is:

A. "To make them sensible of His dominion over them, and of their dependence on Him, and to try their obedience." **Observe:** He was Lord and Master over them, and they owed Him their existence, and continued to depend upon Him for the maintenance of that existence. It was, therefore, only right, if not necessary, that there should be some tribute or testimony required of them to acknowledge this dependence, and for this purpose God laid a command upon them, which was at the same time to test their obedience.

Q. But our first parents were tempted by some one to eat the forbidden fruit, and, therefore, the Catechism asks: "Who tempted our first parents to eat the forbidden fruit?" and answers:

A. "The devil," and adds his motive, saying, "envying their happy state." (**Relate history,** *Gen.* iii.) and **observe:** Envy is the natural fruit of disappointed ambition and wounded pride; therefore, seeing that Adam and his posterity were to occupy the thrones of glory, from which he and his rebel companions had fallen, the devil felt as if gnawed with envy towards them, and was urged by this motive to perpetrate their ruin, and that of their posterity.

Q. The Catechism having thus brought the devil upon the scene, desires to exhibit him fully to our view, and therefore asks: "Whom do you mean by the devil?" and answers:

A. That "he is one of the rebellious or fallen angels whom God cast out of heaven." (**Recite** the history of the fall, for which see *Isaias* xiv. 11; 2 *Pet.* ii. 4; *Jude* i. 6).

Q. From speaking of the devil, as one of God's angels before his fall, naturally we inquire, "What do you mean by angels?" and we are answered:

A. "Pure spirits, without a body, created to adore and enjoy God in heaven."

Q. It is further asked, if the angels were created for any other purpose; and we are told:

A. Yes, (*a*) "to assist before the throne of God, and to minister unto Him, (*b*) and they have been often sent from God to man as messengers, (*c*) and they are also appointed our guardians." [(*a*) *Dan.* vii. 10; *Apoc.* vii. 11; (*b*) *Tobias* v.; *Luke* i. 11, 26; (*c*) *Matt.* xviii. 10; *Ps.* xc. 11, &c.]

Q. Returning upon the fallen angels, and after stating, as we have already mentioned, that they were cast out of heaven, because they had rebelled against God, the Catechism asks, if God punished them in any other way:

A. We have anticipated the answer to this question in quoting from St. Peter how God drew them down to hell, &c. (quote again). And in telling us of the condemnation of those unhappy beings to hell, the Catechism takes occasion to say, that hell is a place of eternal torments, that is, of torments that shall never end, as our Saviour so distinctly asserts in the Gospel (quote *Mark.* ix. 43).

Q. The question further asks, "Why did God make hell?" and answers:

A. "To punish the devils or bad angels."

Q. But we are to learn "if any others are condemned to hell besides the devils or bad angels?" and we are told:

A. "Yes, all who die enemies to God, that is, all who die in a state of mortal sin."

Q. And to finish with the subject of hell, we are asked, in fine, "Can any one come out of hell?" and we are answered:

A. "No, out of hell there is no redemption" (quote *Matt.* xxv. 46; *Luke* xvi. 26, &c.)

Q. The chapter ends by inquiring about the good angels who did not rebel, but remained faithful in the hour of temptation; and it teaches us:

A. That "they were confirmed for ever in glory." Observe: They were by far the greater part, two-thirds of the entire number, it is thought.

Conclusion.

Recapitulate the answers, and say something on the justice and judgments of God, to inspire fear, ending with the words, "*the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.*" (*Eccli.* i. 16).

LESSON VI.

ON ORIGINAL SIN.

Q. We have before us the sixth lesson, or chapter of the Catechism. In the previous chapter we were informed of the disobedience of our first parents towards God by eating the forbidden fruit, and this chapter begins by asking, "How did God punish the disobedience of our first parents?" and answers by saying:

A. "They were driven out of Paradise, stripped of original justice and innocence, and condemned to death with their posterity." **Observe:** These are terrible punishments. When God made our first parents, He placed them in a delightful garden, an earthly paradise, a heaven on earth. When they disobeyed, He drove them out of this delightful abode, and placed an angel with a flaming sword at the entrance to guard it. Before their disobedience they shone almost as angels, beaming with justice and innocence, and reflecting in the purity of their souls the perfections of their Creator; but their disobedience deprived them of this justice and innocence, and rendered them hideous in the sight of God. If they had remained faithful, they were not to have died, but after some stay in this world, they were to be taken up to heaven, and established for ever in glory. But having disobeyed, they were condemned to death, themselves and their posterity.

Q. This, however, is not all, for the Catechism goes on to ask: "Did God inflict any other punishment on our first parents?" and replies:

A. "Yes, He deprived them of all right to heaven, and of several other blessings intended for them."

Q. It is then asked, "What were the chief blessings intended for our first parents?" and the answer is:

A. "A constant state of happiness, if they remained faithful to God."

Q. So much respecting our first parents themselves, but with regard to *us*, their posterity, it is asked, if "*we* were condemned to the same punishments as our first parents?" and it is answered:

A. "Yes, we were all made partakers of their sin and punishments, as we should be all sharers in their innocence and happiness, if they had been obedient to God." **Observe:** This is a mystery we cannot understand, but as "*domestics of the Faith*" we are bound to believe the mystery to be sovereignly just, and it remains for us only to say with the angel in the Apocalypse: "*Thou art just, O Lord, who art, and who wast, the Holy One, because Thou hast judged these things;*" and again, "*Yea, O Lord God Almighty, true and just are Thy judgments*" (xvi. 5, 7).

Q. We are then asked, "How do we call the sin of our first parents?" and it is answered:

A. "Original sin," and it is more fully explained by saying, "We inherit it from our first parents, and in it we were conceived and born *children of wrath*." (*Eph.* ii. 3). **Observe:** It comes down to us from our first parents. With the exception of the Immaculate Mother of God, all mankind come into this world infected with it, and all the other evils of this life, public and private, such as wars, famines, pestilences, &c., come from this accursed origin or source.

Q. But this is not all, for the Catechism goes on to inquire, "What other particular effects follow from the sin of our first parents?" and replies:

A. "Our whole nature was corrupted by it; it darkened our understanding, weakened our will, and left in us a strong inclination to evil." **Observe:** Our whole nature, that is, body and soul, but particularly the soul, was injured by it. The understanding lost much of its light, and became comparatively dimmed and darkened; the will lost much of its energy; and a strong inclination to evil, that is, to doing what is wrong, took the place of that facility to do good, which, were it not for original sin, we should all possess.

Q. But original sin is wiped away by baptism; yet all these evils which flow from original sin still continue. Why is this? This is what the Catechism asks in the question, "What is the reason that darkness in our understanding, weakness in our will, and a propensity to evil, still remain, with many other temporal punishments, after original sin is forgiven?" The answer is:

A. "To serve as an occasion of merit to us by resisting our corrupt inclinations, and by bearing patiently the sufferings of this life." **Observe:** This corruption of our nature puts us in a state of warfare in this world, as holy Job tells us, being at

war with our evil inclinations, which are dreadfully stimulated by the devil, and a corrupt world. But as a soldier after fighting successfully has merit for his encounter with the foe who attacked him, so we, when, as St. Paul says, "*we have fought the good fight*," can claim from God the crown of victory. Also having to bear with the sufferings of this life we have a guarantee in these sufferings of everlasting reward. (**Quote** *Matt.* v. 10; *Acts* xiv. 21; 2 *Cor.* iv. 17). This is the way our Divine Lord Himself trod, in order to enter into His glory (*Luke* xxiv. 26), and it is therefore called "the royal way of the cross."

Conclusion.

Recapitulate answers. Exhort to be ever grateful to God for the blessing of being born in the bosom of the Catholic Church, and to be washed in the laver of regeneration by Baptism. **Deplore** the loss of innocence again by actual sin, and **exhort** to repentance and perseverance, ending with the text 2 *Peter* i. 10.

LESSON VII.

ON JESUS CHRIST, Etc.

Q. We are to treat of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, in explaining the seventh chapter of the Catechism. We have already seen, that on account of the share we have had in the disobedience of our first parents, we fell like them, under the power of the devil, but that our Divine Lord, the Second Person of the Most Adorable Trinity, became man, to rescue us from his grasp, and satisfy the outraged justice of God. But it is asked: if "Jesus Christ became man immediately after the transgression of our first parents?" and we are to answer:

A. "No; although he was immediately promised to them as a Redeemer." **Recite** the promise and explain it, as in *Genesis*, iii. 15.

Q. Christ not having become man immediately after the fall of our first parents, it is asked: "How many years after the fall

of our first parents did Christ become man?" It is answered, as we all know:

A. "About four thousand years."

Q. But then, it is a most important question, "how could people be saved during these four thousand years, as the promised Redeemer had not yet come?" The Catechism answers the question, by saying:

A. "By the belief of a Redeemer to come, and by keeping the Commandments of God." **Observe**: A thousand years with God are, as the Scripture tells us, only as yesterday that is passed, and four thousand years count not as a moment, in comparison with eternity. But many generations of men came and passed away in this world during these four thousand years, and the way open for them to be saved was, in the first place, a faith in the promised Redeemer, and secondly, the keeping of God's Commandments. To maintain this faith in the Redeemer to come, God raised up prophets and other holy men to preach it without ceasing, and it was preserved as a most precious tradition in family life, from the Patriarchs till our Divine Lord actually came. By this faith they laid hold on the merits of Christ by anticipation, and the elect were saved. Our Divine Lord delayed His coming, to render more and more intense the desire amongst mankind of their great Deliverer, and to make them feel, by sad experience, the great necessity they had of Him, in order to lift up a depraved and fallen world.

Q. The Catechism goes on to ask: "On what day did Christ become man?" and tells us:

A. "On the twenty-fifth of March, the day of the Annunciation, He was conceived by the Holy Ghost."—*Apostles' Creed.*

Q. The day on which Christ became man is called the Feast of the Annunciation. The Catechism asks "why it has this name," and informs us of the reason, saying:

A. "Because on that day the Angel Gabriel announced to the Blessed Virgin: "*Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and shalt bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus.*" (*Luke* i. 31).

Observe: It might be also called the feast of the Incarnation, on account of our Divine Saviour becoming incarnate on that day; but the title of Annunciation is that which the Church applies in designating the festival.

Q. Christ having been conceived on the twenty-fifth of March, it is asked: "On what day was He born?" and it is answered:

A. "On Christmas Day;" and the Catechism adds: "in a stable at Bethlehem." (**Tell the history of His birth**) and **observe** that, as Mary conceived without any detriment to her virginal purity, so did she bring forth our Divine Lord remaining still a virgin.

Q. The Catechism proceeds to ask: "How long did Christ live on earth?" why He lived so long amongst mankind? when and how He died? and answers:

A. That He lived a most holy life for thirty-three years; that His reason for living so long in this world was to "show us the way to heaven by His instruction and example;" and that "on Good Friday He was crucified on Mount Calvary, and died nailed to a cross."

Q. With regard to Good Friday, we are asked: "Why do we call that day 'good,' on which Christ suffered so painful and ignominious a death?" **Observe**: One might at first sight fancy the word "good" to be misapplied in the title of "Good Friday," considering the painful and ignominious death of our Saviour; but it is answered:

A. That the reason for calling it "good" is, "Because on that day, by dying on the cross, He showed the excess of His love, and purchased every blessing for us."

Q. We are next asked: "Who condemned Christ to so cruel a death?" the answer tells us:

A. "Pontius Pilate, the Roman Governor, at the desire of the Jews." **Observe**: That the Jews had not the authority themselves to put Him to death, and it was therefore necessary to have the sentence of death pronounced by the Roman Governor.

Q. Thus placing before us the death of our Divine Lord, the Catechism would ask: "What do we infer from the sufferings and death of Christ?" and it replies:

A. "The enormity of sin, the hatred God bears to it, and the necessity of satisfying for it." (**Explain why**).

Q. Finally, we are asked: "Did anything remarkable happen at the death of Christ?" and we answer:

A. Yes; "*the sun was darkened, the earth trembled, the dead arose and appeared to many.*" (*Matt.* xxvii.) **A word or two on each phenomenon.**

Conclusion.

Sum up the answers continuously, and dwell on the inferences to be drawn from the suffering and death of Christ, in order to excite sorrow for sin, and a spirit of penance, ending with the words, that if God the Father had not even spared His own Son, merely because He took upon Himself our sins, how much less will He spare us, the real sinners, unless we do penance for them.

LESSON VIII.

ON CHRIST'S DESCENT INTO HELL, AND ON HIS RESURRECTION AND ASCENSION INTO HEAVEN.

Q. We are to entertain ourselves to-day with the eighth lesson of the Catechism. It begins with the question: "Where did Christ's soul go after His death?" **Observe**: The preceding chapter treated of our Blessed Lord from His Incarnation in the chaste womb of Mary to His death upon the cross; and now that He is dead, His soul is separated from His body, and we are asked where did it go?

A. The Catechism answers that "It descended into hell," as we repeat in reciting the Apostles' Creed; and then it is asked:

Q. "Did Christ's soul descend into the hell of the damned?" and it is answered:

A. "No; but to a place, or state of rest, called Limbo." **Observe**: That besides heaven the Christian doctrine tells of three distinct places in the other life, viz.: hell, purgatory, and Limbo. It was to this last place, called Limbo, that the soul of our Saviour descended when He expired on the cross.

Q. Then, for further information respecting Limbo, we are asked: "Who were in Limbo?" and it is replied:

A. "The souls of the saints who died before Christ." **Observe**: The Patriarchs, Prophets, and other saints, who died before Christ, merited their salvation by keeping God's Commandments, and by believing in a Redeemer to come, but heaven remained shut against them for the reason we shall see later on.

Q. The Catechism then asks: "Why did Christ descend into Limbo?" and replies in the words of St. Peter:

A. That His reason was, "*to preach to those spirits that were in prison*" (1 *Peter* iii. 19), "that is, to announce to them in person the joyful tidings of their redemption." **Apply** the text, and **add** a few words on the joy these poor souls must have experienced at the sight of their Deliverer, and on hearing from Him the tidings of their speedy ascent with Him to heaven.

Q. But it is asked: "Why did not the souls of the saints, who died before Christ, go to heaven immediately after their death?" and it is answered that:

A. "Because heaven was shut against them by the sin of our first parents, and could not be opened to any one but by the death of Christ." **Observe:** By dying for mankind on the cross, our Blessed Saviour triumphed over death, sin and hell, but this triumph was to be celebrated by the glorious procession of the great Conqueror, accompanied by all the saints of the Old Law, with whom He was to make His entrance into heaven. (**Describe the entrance**, *Psalm* xxiii.)

Q. Then follows the question, which we have anticipated: "When did the souls of the saints who died before Christ go to heaven?" We answer:

A. "When Christ ascended into heaven," leading the way and opening the gates for them.

Q. Having said so much about the soul of our Saviour, the Catechism asks what about the body: "Where was Christ's body when His soul was in Limbo?" and tells us:

A. "In the sepulchre, or grave." **Recite** *Gospel narrative* (*Luke* xxiii.); **applying** *texts* (*Acts* ii. 24–27; *Ps.* xv. 10).

Q. The Catechism goes on to ask: "On what day did Christ rise from the dead?" and answers:

A. "On Easter Sunday, the third day after He was crucified, He arose in body and soul, glorious and immortal, from the dead." (*The Gospel narrative*).

Q. Then, with regard to the Resurrection of our Divine Lord, we are asked: "What does it prove?" and it is answered:

A. "That it proves Him to be God, in the same way as dying on the cross had proved Him to be man." (**Recite** the Gospel narrative of the Resurrection).

Q. Then we are asked: "How long did Christ stay on earth after His Resurrection?" and it is replied, as we all know:

A. Forty days, to show that He was truly risen from the dead, and to instruct His Apostles.

Observe: The faith of the Apostles and Disciples was very much disconcerted by our Saviour's Passion, and it was, therefore, necessary that He should prove, beyond all doubt, this fundamental truth of Christianity, that He was *really* risen. (**Quote** *St. John* xx., respecting St. Thomas, also *St. Luke* xxiv., 36 *et seq.*) It was also necessary to instruct them, and to bestow upon them the spiritual powers they required for their ministry. (*John* xx. 23, *et seq.*; *Matt.* xxviii. 18).

Q. "After Christ had remained forty days on earth, where did He go?" the answer is:

A "On Ascension Day, He ascended from Mount Olivet, with His body and soul, into heaven." (*Apostles' Creed.*) **Recite** the narrative, *Acts* i.

Q. Our Saviour having thus ascended into heaven, we are asked, "Where is Christ in heaven?" The Creed gives answer:

A. "He sits at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty." (*Apostles' Creed.—Heb.* i. 3).

Q. For explanation we are asked: "What do you mean by saying Christ sits at the right hand of God?" and we are to reply:

A. "I mean that Christ, as God, is equal to the Father in all things; and, as man, is in the highest place in heaven, next to God in power and glory."

In heaven our Divine Lord continues to be true God and true man, but man in a glorified state. As God, He is equal to the Eternal Father in all things; and as man He has the highest place in heaven in power and glory; higher than the angels and archangels; higher even than His Blessed Mother, with His enemies, sin, death and hell at his feet, as His footstool.

Q. Finally, the Catechism asks: "What did Christ promise to His Apostles before He ascended into heaven?" to which it is answered

A. "That He would send the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of Truth, to teach them all things, and to abide with them for ever." (*John* xiv. 16).

Conclusion.

Conclude by saying, that the Christian is to celebrate the Resurrection of Christ by rising from sin, and that, as Christ arose never to die again, so we should not return to sin; that His Ascension is the encouragement of our hope: that, as He Himself says, where He is we may be also, singing His praises in concert with the heavenly court in the words of the Apocalypse, iv. 8, 11.

LESSON IX.

ON THE DESCENT OF THE HOLY GHOST: ON THE NEW LAW; AND ON THE SIGN OF THE CROSS.

Q. We are to explain the ninth chapter of the Catechism for our instruction this evening. The last chapter ended with the promise of our Divine Saviour, that, having ascended into heaven, He would send the Holy Ghost, and, therefore, this chapter begins by asking: "On what day, and after what manner, did the Holy Ghost descend on the Apostles?" and answers:

A. "On Whit-Sunday the Holy Ghost descended in the form of tongues of fire, and sat upon every one of them." (Give the history of the fact, as in *Acts* ii.)

Q. To teach us the wonderful effects wrought by the Holy Ghost in the Apostles and Disciples, the Catechism goes on to ask: "What does the Scripture say of those who received the Holy Ghost?" and replies:

A. "They were filled with the Holy Ghost, and they began to speak in divers tongues the wonderful works of God." (Narrate the particulars, as in *Acts* ii.)

Q. It interests us to know: "Why did Christ send the Holy Ghost?" The answer is:

A. "To sanctify His Church, to comfort His Apostles, and to enable them to preach His Gospel, or the New Law." (A word or two of comment on each of the reasons).

Q. The Holy Ghost having been sent to enable the Apostles to preach the Gospel, or the New Law, we are naturally asked what is this New Law, and, at the same time, what was the Law in existence on the part of God before it? The answer tells us that:

A. The New Law is "the Law which Christ established on earth," and the Old Law "that which was given to the Jews."

Q. We are followers of the New Law, and, as such, we are asked how we are called? We reply:

A. We are called Christians, in the same way as the followers of the Old Law were called Jews.

Q. Then, having the name of Christians, we are asked how we are known to be Christians in reality and effect? and we are to answer:

A. "By being baptized, by professing the doctrine of Christ, and by the sign of the cross." **Observe:** Here are three distinct ways by which we are known to be Christians: first, &c., second, &c., and third, &c. **(A word or two on each).**

Q. The sign of the cross being a sign and symbol that we are Christians, we are naturally asked how this blessed sign is made, and are taught to say:

A. "By putting the right hand to the forehead, then under the breast, then to the left and right shoulders, saying: 'In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.' **(Here make the sign of the cross with the words).**

Q. And as religion has a reason for everything, we are asked: "Why do we make the sign of the cross?" and we reply:

A. "To beg that Jesus Christ, by His cross and passion, may bless and protect us." **(A word or two of comment).**

Q. The sign of the cross being a profession of our faith as Christians, and having the effect of securing the blessing and protection of our Divine Lord, we ask, "Should we frequently make it?" and we are told:

A. "Yes; particularly in all temptations and dangers, and before and after prayer, but always with great attention and devotion." **(Here mention** the practice of the Church from the earliest times.—**See** *Butler's Feasts and Fasts, vol.* i., *chap.* vii.)

Q. We are further asked: "What does the sign of the cross signify?" and we are answered:

A. That it is full of meaning and holy significance; signify-

ing, as it does, and bringing before our minds, the principal mysteries of religion.

Q. The Catechism asks: "What are these principal mysteries?" and it tells us:

A. That they are: "The Blessed Trinity, and the Incarnation and Death of our Saviour."

Q. The Catechism proceeds to inquire how the sign of the cross has the effect of recalling the principal mysteries to our minds; and answers, first respecting the Blessed Trinity:

A. That we bring that great mystery before our minds, in blessing ourselves, by saying: "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." And, with respect to the Incarnation and Death of our Saviour, we are reminded of these mysteries by the motion of our hand from forehead to breast, and from left to right shoulder, whereby we produce the sign of the cross, and must naturally remind ourselves of our Saviour dying for us on the cross; and because He could not have died without being a mortal man, we are reminded thereby of His Incarnation, whereby He became man.

Q. The chapter ends by asking us: "Where are the true Christians to be found?" and answers:

A. "Only in the true Church." **Observe:** This we will see in the following lesson. **Tell** the apparition of the cross to Constantine, and the consequences.

Conclusion.

Conclude by a consecutive summary of the answers, and **add** a reflection on the descent of the Holy Ghost, as also on the sign of the cross, ending with the words: "*God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified to me, and I to the world.*"—*Gal.* vi. 14.

LESSON X.

ON THE TRUE CHURCH.

The foregoing lesson of the Catechism, Lesson IX., ended by telling us true Christians are to be found only in the true Church, and the present lesson, Lesson X., in continuation of the subject, asks:

Q. "What do you mean by the true Church?" We answer:

A. "The congregation of all the faithful, who, being baptized, profess the same faith, partake of the same Sacraments, and are governed by their lawful pastors, under one visible head on earth.

Observe: In this description of the true Church we have several things to notice. First, that it is the congregation of all the faithful, that is, a society or association, or company, consisting of all true Christians. In the second place, the faithful, or members of the true Church, must profess the same doctrine or teaching, namely, the teaching of our Divine Lord and His Apostles, which must be the same on every point, as we cannot suppose our Saviour saying one thing one time, and a contrary thing another time; neither can we suppose any difference between Him and His Apostles, or between the Apostles themselves in what they taught mankind. In the third place they must partake of the same Sacraments. Our Divine Lord instituted the Sacraments as so many channels of grace, and as He did not institute different Sacraments for different sets of mankind, it follows that all true Christians must partake of the same Sacraments. In the fourth place, the faithful are to be governed by their lawful pastors. No society can exist without a government or governors. The Church, therefore, must have her governors or pastors. They are called pastors, or shepherds, because our Divine Lord spoke of the Church He was to leave after Him as a sheepfold, the faithful being, as it were, sheep, and the rulers shepherds. Now it would not answer to have shepherds who would be quarrelling with each other, some driving the sheep one way, some another, so the pastor of the sheep, that is, of the faithful, must be lawfully

appointed to insure uniform guidance of the fold of Christ, or of His Church. In the fifth place, these pastors must be all under one visible head on earth. When the Catechism speaks of a visible head on earth, it leaves us to infer that there is an invisible head too, and that He is in heaven; and so it is, our Divine Saviour still continues to rule His Church from the heights of heaven; but, before ascending to heaven, He appointed a visible head who was to be His vicegerent, His representative, His second self in the government of His Church, having charge of His entire Church, both pastors and people. Such is the character of the true Church. But, to fix our ideas more accurately, the Catechism asks:

Q. "How do you call the true Church?" and we reply:

A. "The Holy Catholic Church."

This is what we call her every day in the Creed: "I believe in the Holy Catholic Church." So far the Catechism has spoken of the true Church of Christ as *one:* but to leave no room for doubt, it asks the question:

Q. "Is there any other Church besides the Holy Catholic Church?" We are taught to say:

A. "No; as there is but *one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all,* so there is but one true Church." (*Ephes.* iv. 5, 6).

These are the words of St. Paul, one Lord, not two Lords, one baptism, not two baptisms, one God and Father of all, not two or more Gods and Fathers of all; so, precisely, there is only one faith, not two faiths, and consequently only one Church, because there could not be two churches without two faiths; and if there cannot be two churches, not even two, what are we to say of the numerous religious sects which have sprung from Protestantism, all and every one of which claims to be a true Church of Christ. According to a recent official enumeration of these sects, in England alone and her dependencies, they amount to one hundred and seventeen. How absurd to imagine Christ our Saviour to be the head of so many different religious denominations, differing from each other in doctrine, discipline, government, and in every way that can make those societies so many different and distinct bodies. Then, as there can be only one true Church, we are asked:

Q. "Are all obliged to be of the true Church?" and we are bound to say:

A. "Yes; no one can be saved out of it." (*Acts* ii.; *Luke* x.; *John* x.; *Matt.* xxviii. 20).

We are referred to the very words of Scripture to maintain this doctrine. But then we are asked by way of objection:

Q. "Will strict honesty to every one, and moral good works, insure salvation, no matter what Church or religion one professes?" and we must say:

A. "No; unless such good works be enlivened *by faith that worketh by charity.*" (*Gal.* v. 6). **Observe:** These are the words of Scripture, the words of the Holy Ghost Himself. But we are asked to give a reason:

Q. "Why must our good works be enlivened by faith?" and we reply:

A. Because the Scripture says, "*without faith it is impossible to please God; and he that believeth not shall be condemned.*" (*Heb.* xi. 6; *Mark* xvi. 16).

Observe: From these words it is clear, that there is no salvation without faith, that is, without believing in the truths which God has taught mankind. But these truths are to be found only in the true Church, and that Church is one; therefore, there is no salvation but in this one true Church, and no amount of good works can secure salvation outside its pale. But here a controversial question is thrown in our way, and we are asked:

Q. "Are we justified by faith alone, without good works?" we answer:

A. "No; *as the body without the spirit is dead, so also faith without good works is dead.*" (*James* ii. 26).

Observe: The Apostle is not satisfied with a simple denial of the Protestant doctrine, but makes use of an illustration to explain the true doctrine, on the other side, saying: "*As the body without the spirit is dead, so also faith without good works is dead.*" Hence the distinction between what we call living works and dead works. But our good works must be enlivened not only by faith, but also by charity. Hence we are asked:

Q. "Must our good works be also enlivened by charity?" and we make answer:

A. "Yes:" for St. Paul says, "*If I should distribute all my goods to feed the poor, and if I should deliver my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.*" (1 *Cor.* xiii. 3).

To explain the meaning of those remarkable words of the Apostle, we are asked:

Q. "What is that charity of which St. Paul speaks?" and we explain it to be:

A. "That pure and sincere love of God, which makes us do His will in all things, and be obedient to *His Church, which He commands us to hear.*" (*Matt.* xviii. 17; *Luke* x. 16).

Observe: We prove our love to God by performing His Divine will in the different ways in which He points out to us His blessed will. This He does first in His Commandments, which are the immediate expression of His will. Secondly, in the Precepts of His Church, saying of the pastors of His Church, "*he who hears you hears Me, and he who despises you despises Me.*" And thirdly, in the faithful discharge of the duties of that state of life in which God has placed us, doing these duties with the sincere and earnest intention of pleasing God in all things.

Well, then, as it is necessary for salvation to belong to the true Church, we are asked:

Q. "What are the marks or signs of the true Church?"

Observe: That our Divine Lord looking into the future saw, when He instituted His Church, that there would be many sects in course of time, all of which would claim to be His Church; and He therefore felt how necessary it was to set a seal, in the way of certain marks or signs, on His true Church, by which it could easily be distinguished from these false sects, and these marks should be so obvious, as to be observable not only by the learned and wise, but by the ignorant and simple, who were, at all times, to be the greater bulk of mankind, and comprise especially the poor, who are ever the particular objects of God's love. Therefore we are asked what are those marks, and we answer:

A. "The true Church is One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolical."

Observe: She must be *One*, for our Divine Lord established only one, and whether spoken of literally or by way of figure, *e.g.*, a fold, a kingdom, &c. Secondly, the Church must also be *Holy*, because instituted by the God of all holiness, and destined to conduct mankind to everlasting life, which cannot be except by way of holiness. Thirdly, she must also be *Catholic*, because our Divine Saviour died for all mankind, and therefore ordained that the Church which was to apply the

merits of His death, should be the Church of mankind, spread over the entire world. And fourthly, she must be *Apostolical.*

Then we are asked successively, how the Church is One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolical. And first "how she is *One?*" we reply:

A. "That she is *One*, in being *one body*, animated by *one spirit* and *one fold*, under *one head and shepherd*, Jesus Christ, *who is over all the Church.*" (*Rom.* xii. 5: 1 *Cor.* xii. 11. *John* x. 16; *Ephes.* i. 22, 23; iv. 4). **Show** the Catholic Church to be *One* in these various ways.

Q. We are further asked, "In what is the Church *One?*" and we answer:

A. "In all its members believing the same truths, having the same sacraments and sacrifice, and in being under one visible head on earth." **Show** all this to be in the Church.

Q. In the second place we are asked, "How is the Church *Holy?*" and we answer:

A. "In its Founder, Jesus Christ; in its doctrine, sacraments and sacrifice; and in the number of its children who have been eminent for holiness in all ages." **Point out** all this in the Catholic Church.

Q. In the third place we are asked, "How is the Church *Catholic* or universal?" and we reply:

A. "Because it has subsisted in every age, and is to last to the end of time, and will be spread throughout all nations." (*Matt.* xxviii. 19; *Mark* xvi. 15; *Matt.* xvi. 18). **Explain** reply.

Q. Finally, we are asked, "How is the Church *Apostolical?*" we answer:

A. "Because it was founded by Christ on the Apostles, and is governed by their lawful successors; and because it never ceased and never will cease to teach their doctrine." (**Quote** *Ephes.* ii. 20, 21, 22; *Matt.* xxviii. 20, &c., and **apply answer to the Catholic Church**).

Conclusion.

Sum up the answers in a continuous recital. Some words of thanksgiving to God for our having been born in the bosom of the One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolical Church, not on account of any merits of our own, but according to His mercy, saving us by the

laver of regeneration and renovation of the Holy Ghost, "*Whom He hath poured upon us abundantly, through Jesus Christ our Saviour: that being justified by His grace, we may be heirs, according to hope of life everlasting.*" (*Titus* iii. 6, 7).

Recite a statement respecting an illustrious Chancellor of Poland, who, as he was dying, had a special article inserted in his will, in which, after expressing the great happiness he felt in dying a member of the Catholic Church, he addressed the following words to his son: "It were much better, my dear son, not to have been born than to live out of the bosom of the Catholic Church." These words have been preserved in his posterity, and are a precious inheritance, combining family affection and reverence for a venerated ancestor, with the other motives his descendants continue to have for remaining in the Church, of which he was so distinguished a member.

LESSON XI.

THE CHURCH.—*(continued.)*

Q. I have the eleventh lesson of the Catechism before me. It commences by asking: "Why do you call the Church Roman?" this being one of her titles, and we are taught to answer:

A. "Because the visible head of the Church is Bishop of Rome; and because St. Peter and his successors fixed their See in Rome."

Observe: The Church has two heads, the visible head and the invisible head. The invisible head is our Blessed Saviour Himself, governing His Church here on earth from the heights of heaven; but He has a vice-regent here upon earth, or as he may be called, His Vicar, or second self. This is the visible head. He resides in Rome, as all his predecessors from St. Peter, and even St. Peter himself, for the last eighteen hundred years, and upwards, and therefore the Church is called Roman.

Then for greater distinctness we are asked:

Q. "Who is the visible head of the Church?" and we are to reply:

A. "The Pope, who is Christ's Vicar on earth, and supreme visible head of the Church." He is called the Pope, that is father, because he is the universal father of all the faithful, pastors and flock. He is additionally Christ's Vicar, or second

self, here on earth, as already explained, and supreme head of the Church. A Parish Priest is head of the faithful of his parish; a Bishop is head of his diocese, comprising Priests as well as faithful, but the Pope is head over Bishops, Priests, and laity all over the world.

Q. We are next asked: "To whom does the Pope succeed as visible head of the Church?" in other words, "who was the first Pope?" and we answer with all history, he succeeds:

A. "To St. Peter, who was the chief of the Apostles, Christ's Vicar on earth, and first Pope and Bishop of Rome."

Observe: Our Divine Lord chose twelve Apostles to continue His mission on earth, and to propagate His Church, and He made Peter Chief, and as Chief of the Apostles he took the place of our Divine Lord Himself after His ascension, becoming His Vicar; and after spending seven years at Antioch, as Bishop of that See, he removed to Rome, where he ruled the Church for twenty-five years—a period never attained till the reign of the glorious Pius the Ninth, who presided over the Church, by a special Providence, for thirty-two years, being the two hundred and fifty-sixth Pope in succession from St. Peter.

Q. We are next asked: "When," or on what occasion, "was St. Peter made Pope, or head of the Church?" and we answer:

A. Chiefly when Christ said to him: "*Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church, and I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven. Feed My lambs, feed My sheep.*" (*Matt.* xvi.; *John* xxi.)

Observe: Several passages of the Gospel may be quoted to show that our Divine Lord constituted Peter head of the Church, but it is quite enough to refer to the words just mentioned; "*Thou art Peter*," said our Saviour to him. His name was first Simon, but our Blessed Lord changed it into Peter, which means a rock, and therefore He says, "*upon this rock*," or upon thee, as upon a rock, "*I will build My Church, and I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven.*" The meaning of giving keys is giving power. Just as when a king will give up the keys of a town, or a palace, or any other place, to a governor over such a town, palace, or place. So our Saviour is to be understood as giving all power under Himself to St. Peter over the kingdom of heaven, that is, His Church, which is the kingdom of heaven, or of God, in this world; and He added, in another passage,

"*Feed My lambs, feed My sheep.*" (Relate the passage; and observe: the distinction of sheep and lambs means the entire flock, pastors and faithful, whom he was appointed to feed, that is, to rule over as a shepherd rules his flock).

Q. We are then asked: "What do these texts of Scripture prove?" and we answer, as we have just seen:

A. "That Christ committed to St. Peter, and to his lawful successors, the care of His whole flock, that is, of His whole Church, both pastors and people."

Q. So far respecting St. Peter and his successors the Popes, but we are to consider the other Apostles, and ask: "Who succeeded the other Apostles?" and we reply:

A. "The Bishops of the Holy Catholic Church."

Observe: The other Apostles founded churches, and had successors in these churches. These successors are the Bishops, one after another. Besides, new churches sprang up in the course of time, as the Christian religion spread; and the first appointed Bishops of these churches were their Apostles respectively, and were succeeded by other Bishops, according as they passed away by death.

Q. We now come back again to the Church, and the Catechism asks: "Can the Church err in what it teaches?" that is, if she can teach error? and we reply:

A. "No;" and give the reason, because Christ promised to the pastors of His Church: "*Behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world.*" (*Matt.* xxviii. 20).

Observe: As Christ is to be with His Church, teaching and preaching, she can no more go astray in her teaching than He Himself, who, being God, and the sovereign Truth, can neither deceive others, nor be deceived Himself.

Q. The reason is then asked: "Why did Christ promise always to remain with His Church?" and the answer is:

A. "That He Himself, directing and assisting by His Holy Spirit the pastors of His Church, might teach all ages and nations."

Observe: That the children of the Catholic Church, of all times and places, have the great consolation that they are under the guidance of our Blessed Lord Himself, and His Divine Spirit, in all they are taught by the Church.

Q. Besides being with His Church in her teaching, so as to preserve her from error, the Catechism further asks: "What else did Christ promise to His Church?" and replies:

A. "*That the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.*" (*Matt.* xvi. 18).

Observe: These are our Saviour's express words and promise, that "*the gates*," that is, the power of hell, "*shall not prevail against her.*"

Here, then, is our great security. Let hell rage, and all the devils in hell rise up against the Church, employing the persecution of this world, as they have so often and so cruelly done, our Saviour's words remain, and will ever remain, that "*the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.*" Heaven and earth may pass away, but a tittle of what our Saviour has promised will never pass unfulfilled.

Q. We are further asked: "What other advantages have we in the true Church?" and we are told:

A. "We have true faith, with the communion of saints and the forgiveness of sins."

Observe: What great advantages these; advantages not to be purchased by silver or gold! We have the true faith, without which it is impossible to please God, as St. Paul expressly teaches, and we have, moreover, the communion of saints and forgiveness of sins?

Q. What is meant by the communion of saints, the Catechism reserves to explain later on, but it asks: "What means the forgiveness of sins?" and answers:

A. "That Christ left to the pastors of His Church the power of forgiving sins" (*John* xx. 23); and reference is made to the words of our Saviour, in which He conferred this power. (**Quote passage,** *John* xx. 21, 22, 23).

Conclusion.

Recapitulate the answers consecutively, and dwell upon the succession of the Popes, reckoning two hundred and fifty-seven from the commencement, including the reigning Pontiff, Leo XIII. Some words of comment upon the trials, difficulties, &c., they had to surmount: thirty of whom, one after another, were put to death in various ways, during the first three hundred years; thirty more, in course of time, having been driven into exile; four cast into prison, four others having been unable to set foot in Rome, and seven others having reigned in banishment in France. The Church, nevertheless, has gone on conquering, and continues to conquer, in pursuance of the promise of her Divine Founder, "*That the gates of hell should never prevail against her.*"

LESSON XII.

ON SIN.

Q. The chapter of the Catechism, which we are to explain this evening, begins with asking the important question, "What is sin?" and answers:

A. "That it is any wilful thought, word, deed, or omission, contrary to the law of God."

Observe: Some people take account only of acts or deeds, as being sinful. The Catechism, however, would tell them, that not only acts or deeds, are sins, but omissions of certain acts or deeds are sins also, when, of course, such acts or deeds are of obligation; and that, besides, words that pass from our lips, and even thoughts that no one but God knows anything about, may be sinful, and are sinful, when they are contrary to the will of God. Yes, this is the great test; is there anything that is contrary to God's holy will, anything that displeases Him, whether a thought, word, deed, or omission, it is a sin by the fact of displeasing His Divine Majesty.

Q. But sins are of different kinds, and, therefore, we are asked: "What is mortal sin?" and we are to answer:

A. "A grievous, *i.e.*, a great offence or transgression against the law of God."

Observe: A mortal sin is not only an offence, but a great offence, against God's law, because it is by transgressing His law that we displease Him, whether such law be pointed out to us by His own Commandments, by the Precepts of His Church, or by the particular obligations of our state in life.

Q. But why has mortal sin the particular name "mortal," or as the Catechism has it, "Why is it called mortal?"

A. The answer is, and it deserves all attention, "Because it kills the soul, by depriving it of its true life, which is sanctifying grace; and because it brings everlasting death and damnation on the soul."

Observe: A person plunges a deadly weapon into his own breast, or, like Judas, goes and hangs himself with a rope, or puts an end to his life in any way; we are horrified when we hear of such an occurrence. And what does the sinner do to himself when he commits mortal sin? He deprives himself of life, and it is not this poor body that he deprives of life, but the

soul, the life of which is more valuable than that of the body, as heaven is above the earth, and as things spiritual are above flesh and blood. He deprives his soul of life by depriving it of sanctifying grace, which is its true and special life. And as a poor human carcase is hideous, and revolting to our eyes to look at it, much more hideous and filthy in the sight of God and His angels is a soul in a state of spiritual death by mortal sin.

The Catechism goes on to explain further, that mortal sin is also called mortal, *i.e.*, deadly, because it brings everlasting death and damnation on the soul. For example, there is a person who has been guilty to-day of mortal sin: let us suppose the case of even *only one* mortal sin. He goes to bed to-night, and dies before morning, or meets with a sudden death in any other way; what have we to say of him? His body is not yet cold, and already the fire of hell is blazing about his soul, and his lot is amongst the damned for ever and ever.

Q. After telling us what mortal sin is, the Catechism would ask us about venial sin, if, like mortal, it "does also deprive the soul of sanctifying grace, and deserve everlasting punishment?"

A. And it tells us, "No; but it hurts the soul by lessening its love for God, and by disposing it to mortal sin." The Scripture says, "*He that contemneth small things, shall fall by little and little.*" (*Eccles.* xix. 1).

Observe: A person may be wounded in two ways, one mortally, and he dies; the other not mortally, but he is hurt more or less seriously. Such is the difference between mortal and venial sin. Mortal sin kills the soul, as we have seen. Venial sin only hurts the soul, but, in hurting the soul, it produces two very sad effects: it lessens its love for God, in the first place, just as an object loses its heat by being removed from a fire or furnace; and, in the second place, it disposes the soul to mortal sin, in the same way as sickness disposes the body to death. And then the Catechism shows how this is to be understood by quoting the warning of the Holy Ghost: "*He that contemneth small things, shall fall by little and little.*" Consumption leads insensibly to death, and comes on very often by neglecting the first symptoms of the disease, which may be slight; so, likewise, mortal sin comes on by our neglecting venial sin, or thinking little of it; and as consumption is more difficult to cure, or rather impossible after a certain stage, so mortal sin is more difficult to guard against as the result of habitual venial sin, than if we were

threatened by some violent temptation, which comes suddenly upon us.

Q. We were told a moment ago that sanctifying grace is the true life of the soul, but for further information we are asked: "What is sanctifying grace?" and we answer:

A. "That grace which sanctifies the soul, and makes it pleasing to God."

Observe: The soul, deprived of sanctifying grace, is, in the sight of God, like a putrid dead body in our eyes, from which we turn away with horror and disgust. But sanctifying grace sanctifies the soul, that is, makes it like an angel before God, and, therefore, makes it pleasing in His sight, like the saints and angels in heaven.

Q. But with regard to grace itself, the Catechism asks: "What do you mean by grace?" and replies:

A. That grace is, "a supernatural gift, destined by God for our sanctification, and to enable us to merit heaven."

Observe: It is called, first, "supernatural," that is, more than, or above what is natural to man, as man; secondly, it is a gift given us by God of His own pure goodness, and wholly unmerited by us, for "*otherwise*," as St. Paul says, "*grace is no more grace*" (*Rom.* xi. 6); thirdly, the purpose for which God gives us His grace is, "to enable us to merit heaven."

Q. Grace being thus granted us, that by means of it we may merit heaven, we are asked: "Is grace necessary to salvation?" and we are to reply:

A. "Yes; *without Me*, says Christ, *you can do nothing*." (*John* xv. 5).

Observe: We are referred to the express words of Christ, and St. Paul tells us we cannot of ourselves form as much as a good thought within us: "*Not that we are sufficient to think anything of ourselves, as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is from God.*" (2 *Cor.* iii. 5). In our natural state, we are somewhat in the position of the palsied man at the pool called the Probatica in Jerusalem. **Relate** the fact (*John* v.); and returning upon it, **remark** how the poor man was unable of himself to descend into the pool, but required assistance. So we require assistance to go to heaven. But as soon as our Saviour gave him strength, all he had to do was to use that strength, and get up and walk. So, when God gives us His grace, as He is always ready to do when we ask it, we have only to obey His voice, by observing the Commandments, and we merit heaven.

Q. The Catechism again returns upon mortal sin, and asks:

"Is it a great misfortune to fall into mortal sin?" and answers:

A. "It is the greatest of all misfortunes."

Observe: Greater than poverty, than disgrace, than sickness, than death itself. Therefore St. Paul asks (*Rom.* viii. 35, 38): "*Who then shall separate us from the love of Christ?*" or, in other words, who shall make us be guilty of mortal sin? and he goes on to ask: *Shall tribulation? or distress? or famine? or nakedness? or persecution? or the sword?*" and answers: "*I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor might, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*"

Q. Mortal sin being such a terrible misfortune, we are asked: "What must we do if we fall into mortal sin?" and we are told:

A. "We must repent sincerely, and go to confession as soon as possible." **Observe**: Two things are required of one who has fallen into mortal sin. First, to repent sincerely (**Quote** example of the Publican, *Luke* xviii., **and apply it**). The second thing to be done is "to go to confession as soon as possible." The Catechism does not say Christmas, or Easter, but, "as soon as possible," and to tell us the reason, it immediately asks:

Q. "Why should we go to confession as soon as we fall into mortal sin?" to which we are to answer:

A. "That we may recover God's friendship, and be always prepared to die."

Observe: No time is to be lost, when there is question of rescuing ourselves out of a state in which God is our enemy, and we are the enemies of God, which is always the case as long as we are in mortal sin; nor is any time to be lost in withdrawing ourselves from a state of damnation, which is the state of a sinner in mortal sin, and putting ourselves in a state to be prepared to die, according to the warning of our Saviour, who tells us to be always ready for our call out of this life, as we know not the day nor the hour the call may come.

Q. But sometimes we cannot go to confession for some time, and the Catechism would ask us, in that case: "What should we do if we cannot go to confession when we fall into mortal sin?" **and replies:**

A. That in such a case, "We must excite ourselves to perfect contrition, with a sincere desire of going to confession as soon as we can." **Observe**: In such a case we are not only to excite

ourselves to contrition, but to *perfect* contrition, and to teach us what this *perfect* contrition is, we are asked:

Q. "How do you express an act of perfect contrition?" and we are taught to express it as follows:

A. "O my God! I am heartily sorry for having offended Thee, and I detest my sins most sincerely, because they displease Thee, my God, who art so deserving of all my love, on account of Thy infinite goodness and most amiable perfections; and I firmly resolve, by Thy holy grace, never more to offend Thee, and to amend my life."

Observe: Fix attention on the words, "because they displease Thee," &c., as pointing out what perfect contrition is; and **notice** the desire of going to confession as soon as we can.

Q. We are asked as to the effect of perfect contrition: "Will perfect contrition reconcile us to God without confession?" and we say:

A. "Yes; and it is the only means we have to recover God's friendship, when we cannot go to confession."

Q. We are next asked: "How many are the chief mortal sins, commonly called capital or deadly sins?" and we reply:

A. "Seven: Pride, Covetousness, Lust, Anger, Gluttony, Envy, and Sloth." **Observe**: They are called capital sins, because they are, as it were, the fountain-heads of all our other sins; and they are also called mortal, because, though they may be sometimes only venial, on account of the matter concerned, they are still mortal of their own nature, just as poison in a small quantity is not mortal, whereas it is so in an ordinary dose.

Q. Finally, we are asked about mortal and venial sin: "Where do souls go who depart this life in either kind of sin?" and we are to believe:

A. "Those who die in mortal sin are condemned to hell for all eternity; and those who die in venial sin go to purgatory."

Conclusion.

Sum up answers. Some words on sin, quoting our Saviour's words: "*For what doth it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and suffer the loss of his own soul? Or what exchange shall a man give for his soul.*" **Relate** how a Queen of France used to say to her son, when he was growing up, "Son, I would rather see you dead before me, than know you have offended God by a single mortal sin;" and how he grew up in such a horror of sin that he became a great saint, and is honoured by the Church under the title of St. Louis, King of France. **Exhort** parents to inspire children, from infancy, with a similar horror of sin.

LESSON XIII.

ON PURGATORY.

Q. We open the Catechism this evening on the subject of Purgatory, and we are asked: "What is purgatory?" the Catechism replies:

A. "A place or state of punishment in the other life, where some souls suffer for a time before they can go to heaven." (*Matt.* xii. 32).

Q. It has already been stated that those who die in venial sin, go to purgatory, but the question is asked: "Do any others go to purgatory besides those who die in venial sin?" and it is answered:

A. "Yes; all who die indebted to God's justice on account of mortal sin."

Q. To make us understand this reply, we are asked the further question: "When God forgives mortal sin, as to the guilt of it, and the eternal punishment it deserved, does He require temporary punishment to be suffered for it?" Observe: This question requires some explanation. There are three things to be taken into account with respect to mortal sin: 1st, its guilt; 2ndly, the eternal punishment it deserved, before it was forgiven; and 3rdly, a temporary punishment still to be suffered, after it has been forgiven. It is about this temporary punishment the question is raised, and it is asked: "If God reserves such a punishment yet to be suffered, even after He has pardoned mortal sin, as to its guilt and eternal punishment in the Sacrament of Penance;" and we are to answer:

A. "Yes; very often, and for our correction, to deter us from relapsing into sin; and that we should make some atonement to His offended justice and goodness." The first reason for reserving this temporary punishment is for our correction, for punishment is always a means of correction when one has done wrong; secondly, in order to prevent our relapse, because we take care not to fall back again into what we have been chastised for. And a third reason is, that we should make some atonement to God's justice and goodness, as it is most reasonable that an offender should make some reparation or atonement to the person

he has offended. **Recite** the examples (*Numb.* xiv. and 2 *Kings* xii.), showing in each case the mortal sin forgiven, as to its guilt and eternal punishment, and a temporary punishment yet exacted.

Q. Well, then, with regard to these two classes of our fellow-creatures who are detained in purgatory, namely, those who die in venial sin, and those who die indebted to God's justice on account of mortal sin, the Catechism asks: "Can they be relieved by our prayers, and other good works?"

A. We are told: "Yes;" and the reason is added, that, "being children of God, and still members of the Church, they share in the Communion of Saints; and the Scripture says: *It is a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from their sins.*" (2 *Mach.* xii. 46). **Observe**: In Purgatory the souls there confined are, nevertheless, children of God, though for the time being the hand of His justice is heavy upon them, and they share in the Communion of Saints, and the Scripture, moreover, expressly says: "*It is a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from their sins.*"

Here relate the following fact: It is related in the life of St. Lewis Bertrand, one of the early members of the Order of St. Dominic, that, when his father had died, he appeared to him having signs of great distress and suffering, and asking him to pray and say Mass for him, and to have others, as far as he could, to do the same. The saint understood, of course, his father to be in purgatory, and did everything he could, by prayer and constant offering of the Holy Sacrifice, for his relief. However, his father appeared still, from time to time, showing the same signs of suffering. The pious Dominican redoubled his efforts of piety, and it was only after eight years that he obtained his release. The father appeared to him at the end of that time, and thanked him for his filial charity, as he should be detained otherwise for a very long time in purgatory. **Recommend** the practice in family prayers, to pray for the deceased members of the family.

Q. Having mentioned the Communion of Saints in the foregoing answer, the Catechism naturally asks, for our information: "What means the Communion of Saints?" and we reply:

A. "It means, that all who belong to the true Church by their prayers and good works assist each other." The Church of

God in its largest signification is made up of three divisions, the Church triumphant, consisting of the angels and saints in heaven, the Church militant, made up of the faithful here on earth, and the Church suffering composed of the souls in purgatory. These three divisions, though divided, are nevertheless, united in interests common to them all three. Thus we on earth honour the angels and saints in heaven, and they pray for us before the throne of grace. So also we pray for the poor suffering souls in purgatory, and offer up good works to God in their behalf, and in this way send down relief to them in their sufferings.

Q. The next question comes home to ourselves and asks: "If it be sufficient for salvation to be members of the true Church?" in other words, if all Catholics are to go to heaven by simply being such? and we are told distinctly:

A. "No;" and it is added that, "we must, besides, avoid evil and do good." **Observe**: That so far from being better off, we have a severer judgment, and a heavier condemnation, to dread on account of being Catholics, unless we live in accordance with our religious obligations. The Jews had the true religion before it was superseded by the religion of Christ, yet, our Saviour told them that they would be more severely dealt with, on the last day, than Sodom and Gomorrha, because they did not live lives in accordance with their religion. (**Quote** *Matt.* xi. 21).

Q. Then, as we are to avoid evil and do good, every one has to ask himself the question: "*What good shall I do that I may have life everlasting?*" (*Matt.* xix. 16). **Relate** the passage, xix. 16, and say how we are all concerned in the question therein asked of our Divine Lord, and His plain answer is:

A. "*If thou wilt enter into life, keep the Commandments.*" (*Matt.* xix. 17). **Observe**: Here the condition is laid down in the plainest terms for every one of us to gain everlasting life: **we must keep the Commandments.**

Conclusion.

Recapitulate the answers in consecutive order, and end by observing we are made for heaven, that when we had lost our right to it, it was purchased for us back again by the passion and death of our Saviour. **State** it is to be ours only on certain conditions, namely, that we keep God's Commandments; and this it is, that is to make the difference between the good and the bad on the last day, when

the great Judge will say to the good: "*Come, ye blessed of My Father, possess the kingdom prepared for you;*" and will thunder out upon the wicked the terrible sentence: "*Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, which was prepared for the devil and his angels.*" (*Matt.* xxv. 34-41).

LESSON XIV.

ON THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.

Q. We are to begin this evening to treat of the Ten Commandments, and we are asked, in the first place, to repeat them. They are as follows:

A. 1st. I am the Lord thy God; thou shalt not have strange gods before Me.

2nd. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.

3rd. Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath Day.

4th. Honour thy father and thy mother.

5th. Thou shalt not kill.

6th. Thou shalt not commit adultery.

7th. Thou shalt not steal.

8th. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.

9th. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife.

10th. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's goods.

Observe: After repeating them, recite the circumstances under which they were given to mankind (*Exod.* xx.); and say, the reason God had in giving such awful solemnity to the delivering of these Commandments, was to insure reverence from mankind for them, and to give us to understand what dreadful vengeance we are to expect, if we do not keep them.

Q. But it may, perhaps, occur to some persons to think it will be enough to observe some of the Commandments, and neglect the rest. On this account the Catechism asks: "Is it necessary to keep all and every one of the Ten Commandments?" and answers distinctly:

A. "Yes;" and refers to the words of Scripture, "*Whosoever shall offend in one, is become guilty of all,*" that is, the observance

of the other Commandments will not avail him to salvation." (*James* ii. 10). And the reason is, the authority of God, which is engaged in all the Commandments, is engaged also in each and every one of them, and, therefore, by breaking even one, we despise and outrage that authority in all the rest.

Q. Then the Catechism, returning on the Commandments, asks: "Which is the first Commandment?" and replying, says:

A. "I am the Lord thy God; thou shalt not have strange gods before Me," and goes on to ask:

Q. "What is commanded by this Commandment?" and answers:

A. "To adore *one* God, and to adore *but Him* alone. Observe: That the pagans paid worship to several beings, real or imaginary, worshipping them as so many gods, on which account the Catechism tells us we are to adore God, who is one, and to adore but Him alone.

Q. We are then asked, "How we are to adore God?" and we answer:

A. "By faith, hope, and charity; by prayer and sacrifice."

Q. The Catechism, coming back on the answer, asks: "What is faith?" and we reply:

A. "A Divine virtue, by which we firmly believe what God has taught." Observe: Faith is a *Divine* virtue, that is, a virtue which is above our own power to attain, and which must come to us from God by the infusion of His grace. It is also Divine, because it is based upon the word and veracity of God Himself. Then we exercise this virtue, "by firmly believing what God has taught." Observe: It is not enough to believe in a doubting or hesitating way; we must believe "firmly," because God cannot deceive us, nor be deceived Himself, in what He calls upon us to believe.

Q. But, then, an important question arises: "How do we know with certainty what God has taught?" A person may say, I have no difficulty in believing anything that God has taught, but what I am anxious about is, how do we know with certainty what God has taught? We answer by saying:

A. We know this by the authority of the Church, "*which is the pillar and the ground of truth.*" (1 *Tim.* iii. 15). Christ made His Church "*the pillar and the ground of truth,*" as the Apostle says, and, consequently, she must always uphold the truth, and never deceive her children.

Q. And then we are asked the question: "Why do we believe what God has taught?"

A. This question we have already anticipated, and answered, and we have only to repeat, because "He is the infallible truth, and therefore cannot deceive, or be deceived."

Q. From faith we are led on to hope, and we are asked: "What is hope?" and we answer:

A. "A Divine virtue, by which we firmly hope for eternal life and for the means to obtain it." **Observe**: The word "Divine" to be explained as above; and then, the answer tells us what we are to hope for, namely, "eternal life, and for the means to obtain it."

Q. But hope has its motives as well as faith, hence we are asked: "Why do we hope in God?" and we say:

A. "Because He is infinitely powerful, good, and merciful; and because He is faithful to His word, and has promised all graces, even heaven itself, through Jesus Christ, to all those who keep His commandments." **Observe**: Here are several motives pointed out for hoping in God. (First, **state** it; second, **state** it; third, **state** it, &c.; and **lay stress** on the point, that all this supposes, as a necessary condition, that we keep God's commandments).

Q. We are then asked, "What is charity?" and we say:

A. "A Divine virtue, by which we love God above all things for His own sake, and our neighbour as ourselves for the love of God." **Observe**: The word "Divine" to be again explained; after which **say** the object of charity is twofold, God and our neighbour; that we love God for His own sake, and that we love our neighbour for the love of God, so that the motive of our love being the same in both cases, the love of God and the love of our neighbour are not two virtues, but branches of the one and the same virtue.

Q. We are then asked, "How we are to love God above all things?" and we say in reply:

A. "By loving Him more than ourselves, and more than anything in the world, and being disposed to sacrifice everything that is most dear to us, even our very lives, if necessary, rather than offend Him." **Observe**: It was in this way the Apostles and martyrs loved God, laying down their lives for Him sooner than offend Him.

Q. The chapter ends by asking: "Should we often make acts of faith, hope, and charity?" and we are to reply:

A. "Yes; and particularly when we come to the use of reason, and at the hour of death, also when we are tempted to sin, or have sinned, against any of those Divine virtues, and when we prepare ourselves to receive any Sacrament." **Observe:** Give a reason in each instance, &c.

CONCLUSION.

Sum up answers in a continuous statement, and add, that entering upon the Commandments, we enter on the narrow way that leadeth to life, fulfilling the condition laid down by our Divine Lord, "*If thou wilt enter into life keep the Commandments*" (*Matt.* xix. 17), adding that the first Commandment is also the greatest, as our Saviour tells us in the Gospel; and, that to observe the first Commandment, we must cultivate the great virtues of faith, hope, and charity, bearing in mind the words of St. Paul, "*Now there remain faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greater of these is charity.*" (1 *Cor.* xiii. 13).

LESSON XV.

ON THE FIRST COMMANDMENT.

Q. The fifteenth chapter of the Catechism, which we undertake to treat of this evening, deals with the first Commandment in continuation of the preceding chapter, and opens by asking the question, "What is forbidden by the first Commandment?" to which it replies:

A. "All sins against faith, hope, and charity, and other duties of religion," **and then it goes on to ask:**

Q. "How does a person sin against faith?" We are taught to answer:

A. "By not endeavouring to know what God has taught, by not believing what God has taught, and by not professing our belief in what God has taught."

Observe: These words of the Catechism point out three ways of sinning against faith. The first, is by not endeavouring to know what God has taught. We see, then, how much children are to be blamed who will not learn their catechism, and, at the same time, how much parents are in fault who neglect either

teaching their children themselves, or having them taught their catechism by others.

In the second place, people sin against faith by not believing what God has taught, and the Catechism asks, "Who are they?" and replies:

A. "Heretics and infidels, the difference between them being, that heretics may adhere to the teaching of the Church in many points, and deny her teaching in others, or even in one single point of Catholic faith, whilst the infidel disbelieves Christianity altogether.

Q. Then as to the third class of offenders against faith, we are asked, "Who are they who sin against faith by not professing their belief in what God has taught?" and we are to say with the catechism:

A. "All those, who by any outward act, profession, or declaration deny the true religion or church in which they inwardly believe." In other words, a person speaks or acts in such a way as to be taken by those who hear or see him to deny the religion or church he inwardly believes in.

Q. Then we are asked, "Can persons who speak or act in this way, so as to deny outwardly what they inwardly believe, expect salvation whilst in that state?" and we are taught to say:

A. "No;" and we quote the words of our Saviour Himself, who speaks so distinctly and so emphatically on the subject, saying, "*Whosoever shall deny Me before men, I will also deny him before My Father who is in heaven.*" (*Matt.* x. 33.)

Q. Then we are asked, "When in particular are we bound to make open profession of our faith or religion?" **Observe:** We are bound to make open profession of our faith, but as we cannot be doing so always, and on all occasions, the Catechism asks, "When in *particular* are we bound to make open profession of our faith or religion?" and we answer:

A. "As often as God's honour, our own spiritual good or our neighbour's edification requires it." **Observe:** Here are three occasions pointed out for making open profession of our faith: first, when the honour of God requires we should do so; secondly, when our own spiritual good calls for it; and thirdly, when the edification we owe our neighbour demands it. In proof of this teaching, we bring forward our Saviour's own words: "*Every one therefore that shall confess Me before men, I will also confess him before My Father who is in heaven.*" (*Ibid.* 32).

Q. The answer of the Catechism respecting the open profession of our faith gives rise to a serious question, which asks, in the words of the Catechism, "Is a person in the way of salvation, who believes in the true Church, and says that in his heart he is attached to it, but through pride, human respect or worldly motives, does not make open profession of his faith, or does not comply with its essential duties?" **Observe**: This question relates to a double-dealing class of persons. They are Catholics at home, and amongst those who know them. They are away, however, from home, and under particular circumstances, they think it their interest in a worldly point of view, or they are, under the influence of pride or human respect, afraid or ashamed of what those present may think or say of them, and influenced by some such base motives they dissemble or disguise their religion; and with this class another is taken account of, a class who do not comply with their religious duties as Catholics. It is asked, respecting all such persons, "Are they in the way of salvation in so acting?" We must say:

A. No; because St. Paul tells us, "*with the heart, we believe unto justice; but with the mouth, confession is made unto salvation.*" (*Rom.* x. 10). **Observe**: In other words, we must be outwardly what we are inwardly, or, at least, our words and our acts must not give the lie to our inward belief.

Q. But there are persons who have fallen away altogether from Christianity, and who, on that account, are called apostates, and we are asked, what about them? We answer:

A. St. Paul speaks of these unfortunate people, and says: "*It is impossible for them to be renewed again to penance*;" that is, "their conversion is extremely difficult." And he assigns the reason in answer to another question: "Because by their apostacy *they crucify again the Son of God, making Him a mockery.*" (*Heb.* vi. 6). **Observe**: This is not only the language of the Catechism but the express words of St. Paul, which it quotes and applies.

Q. From faith we come to hope, and we are asked: "What are the sins against hope?" We answer:

A. "Despair and presumption." **Observe**: These are two rocks on the right and the left, and we must keep clear of both in order to avoid sinning against hope. They are opposite to each other, despair being a "diffidence in God's mercy," and presumption a "foolish expectation of salvation without making

proper use of the necessary means to obtain it." Thus, while we say that we place all reliance on God, we work and labour as if all depended on ourselves, according to the advice of the Apostle (2 *Pet.* i. 10): "*Wherefore, Brethren, labour the more, that by good works you may make sure your calling and election. For doing these things, you shall not sin at any time.*"

Q. As to charity, we are asked, how we offend against that virtue? and we reply, in taking account of the two branches of charity:

A. "That we offend against charity towards God by every sin, particularly by mortal sin; whilst with regard to our neighbour, we sin against the charity we owe him, "by injuring him in any respect, and by not assisting him, when able, in his spiritual or corporal necessities." This is what the Divine Law clearly lays down for us. Quote *Tobias* iv., and *Matt.* vii. 12.

Conclusion.

Sum up the answers, and say a few sentimental words on the virtues of faith, hope, and charity, ending with the words (1 *Cor.* xiii. 13).

LESSON XVI.

FIRST COMMANDMENT CONTINUED.

Our instruction this evening is to be on a further continuation of the first Commandment, as set forth in the sixteenth lesson of the Catechism, which begins by asking:

Q. "What else is forbidden by the first Commandment?" Observe: The preceding chapter takes account of the sins against faith, hope, and charity, as being forbidden by the first Commandment; and we are now asked what else besides these sins is forbidden under the first Commandment? we answer:

A. We are further forbidden "to give to any creature the honour due to God alone."

For fear this answer would occasion any mistake respecting the saints, we are asked:

Q. "Are we forbidden to honour the saints?" and we answer:

A. "No." But then we add immediately: "If we honour

them only as God's special friends and faithful servants, and if we do not give them Supreme or Divine honour, which belongs to God alone." **Observe**: When we honour any one, we are led naturally to honour the friends of that person; so, the saints being special friends of God, we cannot honour God and refuse honouring them. But, we must make a distinction, and not give them the "Supreme or Divine honour, which belongs to God alone."

Q. But then an important question arises about this distinction: "How do we Catholics distinguish between the honour we give to God and the honour we give to the saints?"

A. We answer: "Of God alone we beg grace and mercy, and of the saints we only ask the assistance of their prayers." **Observe**: Here is the distinction. Suppose we want a favour from an earthly sovereign, and if we approach himself, we ask him directly to confer the favour upon us; but if, instead of approaching the sovereign, we ask some influential person in court, as being more worthy than ourselves of being favourably heard, we would not ask that person to grant us the favour in question himself, but we would beg of him to use his influence in court, and beg the favour for us of the king. So, &c. **(Apply.)**

Q. But, it may be asked, why not go straightway to the fountain head at once? and therefore we are asked: "Is it lawful to recommend ourselves to the saints, and to ask their prayers?" and we answer:

A. "Yes; as it is lawful and a very pious practice to ask the prayers of our fellow-creatures on earth, and to pray for them." **Observe**: It has always been a practice from the beginning in the Church, and the Apostles gave us the example of asking each other's prayers, particularly the prayers of holy people. **Quote the passages** 1 *Thess.* v. 25, and *James* v. 16: "*Brethren, pray for us;*" "*Confess therefore your sins one to another, and pray for one another, that you may be saved. For the continual prayer of a just man availeth much.*"

Q. We, Catholics, kneel before the images of Christ and His saints; heretics take offence at this practice, and would ask us why we do it? we would tell them:

A. That we do so "to honour Christ and His saints, whom their images represent." **Observe**: If we love and respect any one, we would naturally wish to have his likeness, and we

would honour it on his account, because it is his likeness. (**Apply the example**).

Q. We are, therefore, prepared for the question: "Is it proper to show any mark of respect to the crucifix, and the pictures of Christ and His saints?"

A. And we say, by all means, "Yes;" and for the reason assigned, "because they relate to Christ and His saints," that is, they carry our minds forward to them personally, and in themselves, "being representations and memorials of them;" that is, the likenesses of them.

Q. But, from pictures and representations, we are brought to consider the relics of the saints; that is, their bodies, or portions of their bodies, or clothes, or anything belonging to them after their death, and we are asked, "Why honour these relics?"

A. We reply, first, as to their bodies, that our reason for honouring them is because they had been, as the Scripture tells us, "*the temples of the Holy Ghost.*" (**Quote** 1 *Cor.* iii. 16, 17): "*Know you not, that you are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? But if any man violate the temple of God, him shall God destroy. For the temple of God is holy, which you are.*" Or, as the Apostle says elsewhere: "*Know you not, that your members are the temple of the Holy Ghost, who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own?*" (1 *Cor.* vi. 19.) Also on the last day they will be honoured and glorified for ever in heaven, when they will be invested with the glorious properties of brightness, impassibility, agility, and subtility. And as to other relics, such as the clothes, &c., the Scripture tells us (**Quote** *Acts* xix. 12): "*So that even there were brought from his body to the sick, handkerchiefs and aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the wicked spirits went out of them;*" and **relate** the fact respecting Eliseus, as in 4 *Kings* xiii. 20, 21; and *Eccli.* xlviii. 14, 15.

Q. We are then asked, "May we pray to the crucifix, or the images or relics of the saints?" **Observe**: We have seen the reason for praying *before* the crucifix, &c. This gives occasion for the question, if we may pray *to* the crucifix, or *to* the images or relics of the saints?

A. And we say, "By no means;" and we add the reason, "Because they have neither life, nor sense, nor power, to hear or help us."

Q. Then, if we do not pray *to* them, we are asked: "Why do we pray *before* them?"

A. We reply: "Because they enliven our devotion, by exciting pious affections and desires, and by reminding us of Christ and His saints; they also encourage us to imitate their virtues and good works. (**A word or two** on each reason separately, and in succession).

Q. But about *making* images we are asked: If such a thing be not forbidden by the first Commandment?

A. And we reply: "It is only forbidden to make them for the purpose of honouring them as gods, in imitation of the idolaters, who make them for that purpose."

Q. Finally, we are asked: "Is there anything else forbidden by the first Commandment?"

A. And we reply: "Yes; all dealings and communications with the devil, and inquiry after things lost, hidden, or to come, by improper means." As also giving credit to dreams, fortune-telling, incantations, spells, observances of omens and accidents, and such nonsensical remarks, are also very sinful. (**A word on each**, to say, so far as necessary, what it is, and to condemn it).

Q. The chapter closes by asking: "What do you think of theatrical representations, and of other amusements, particularly at wakes, in which religion, its ministers, and sacred ceremonies are ridiculed?" and we are taught to reply:

A. "All these things are impious and highly criminal, and strictly forbidden by the first Commandment. **Lament** that these abuses have been at all times, and exist still; but that religion protests against them, denounces them as highly impious and criminal. **Recite** the fact told by St. Augustine, in the sixth book of his Confessions, chapters seven and eight, respecting his friend Alypius.

Conclusion.

Sum up the answers consecutively, and with the words: "*To the King of ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.*" (**1 *Tim.* i. 17**).

LESSON XVII.

ON THE SECOND, THIRD, AND FOURTH COMMANDMENTS.

The seventeenth lesson of the Catechism is to occupy us this evening. It treats of the second, third, and fourth Commandments of God. We shall likely find enough to engage us in the second and third within the time allowed us.

Q. The second Commandment says to us: "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain." And we are asked, all at once, what do these words command us? We answer:

A. "To speak with reverence of God, of His saints, and His ministers of religion, its practices and ceremonies, and of all things relating to Divine service." **Observe**: When we speak of what is holy, we must speak in a manner suitable to such subjects, that is, with the reverence to which they are entitled. Whenever we speak of God, we must speak of Him with profound reverence. For a similar reason, we are to speak of His saints, as also of the ministers of religion, such as the Pope, the Bishops and Priests, with reverence; and we are further to observe this same reverence as we speak of religion itself, its practices, its ceremonies, and all things relating to Divine service.

Q. Beyond all this we are asked: "What else is commanded by the second Commandment?" and we reply:

A. "To keep our lawful oaths and vows." **Observe**: An oath is a form of words, by which we call God to witness that what we say is true; or, if the oath regard the future, that we are sincere in what we say. A vow is a different thing. It is a promise we make to God of something better to do than not to do; for instance, a person promises God that he will give an alms, that he will perform a pilgrimage; or, a person in a community promises to God a life of poverty, chastity and obedience. Now, the second Commandment requires us to be faithful to keep religiously these oaths and vows, as engagements binding on our souls before God. But there may be *unlawful* as well

as *lawful* oaths and vows. Hence the Catechism makes the distinction, and binds us only to such as are *lawful.*

Q. From asking us what is commanded, the Catechism goes on to ask, what is forbidden by the second Commandment? and replies:

A. "All false, rash, unjust, and unnecessary oaths; also cursing, swearing, blaspheming, and profane words." Observe: An oath is false, when it is contrary to what we have in our minds at the time. It is rash, when there is no need of swearing at the time. We must not swear in this way. We must also keep our tongues from cursing, *i.e.*, expressing a bad wish to any one; from swearing, as we hear people when in a passion; blaspheming, *i.e.*, using God's name, or His saints or holy things, in a profane and irreverent manner; and, in general, we must refrain from all words of a profane character.

Q. But we are asked: "Is it ever lawful to swear?" and the question deserves attention because our Divine Lord says in the Gospel (*Matt.* v. 34): "*I say to you not to swear at all, neither by heaven, for it is the throne of God,*" *&c.*:

A. We say "Yes, it is lawful, when God's honour, our own honour, or our neighbour's good, or necessary defence require it." Observe: Here are the occasions: *first*, when God's honour requires it; *secondly*, when our own good is at stake; *thirdly*, when that of our neighbour requires it. In these cases we are not only allowed, but it may be an obligation, to take an oath, as people do in courts of justice. God Almighty Himself and His servants give us the example in such cases.

Q. We are next asked: "What is an unjust oath?" and the Catechism replying tells us, that it is an oath injurious to ourselves or to our neighbour; after which it inquires if we are obliged to keep such an oath?

A. The answer is most certain, that we are not. If we were it would become a bond of iniquity upon us. "No; a person sins in taking it, and would also sin in fulfilling it."

Q. But with regard to a lawful oath, are we obliged to keep it?

A. No doubt about it; and it would be perjury to break it.

Q. Then the Catechism asks, "What is perjury?" and replies:

A. "To break a lawful oath, or take a false one." A person has taken a lawful oath, it would be perjury not to keep it. Also

a person takes a false oath, an oath contrary to truth, he is guilty of perjury thereby.

Q. Then we are asked, if perjury be a great sin, and we are to answer:

A. Yes, "it is a most grievous sin:" because by being guilty of perjury, a person would make God a liar, as far as depends upon him, by making God witness a lie, as if it were true, which is a terrible outrage on the God of truth.

Q. We proceed to the third Commandment, which is: "Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath day," and we are asked, "What are the chief duties in which we should spend the Sunday?" and we are to reply:

A. "Hearing Mass devoutly, attending Vespers or evening prayers, reading moral and pious books, or going to Communion." **Observe:** Hearing Mass is the principal duty on Sunday, and it binds us under pain of mortal sin, unless there be a lawful excuse. Besides it would be well, if convenient, to go to Vespers. Reading good books, especially if we cannot hear a sermon, should be attended to; and, of course, nothing could be better for the sanctification of the Sunday than going to Communion.

Q. We are then brought back on the hearing of Mass, and asked, "Is that sufficient to sanctify the Sunday?" we are to say:

A. "No; a part of the day should also be given to prayer and other good works;" and a variety of good works is pointed out, such as the works of mercy, spiritual and corporal, to instruct the ignorant, such as servants, or poor people, and their children.

Q. Then we are asked: "What is forbidden by the third Commandment?" and we are to reply:

A. "All unnecessary servile work, and whatever may hinder the due observance of the Lord's Day, or tend to profane it." **Observe:** The word "unnecessary" leaves us to infer, that there may be necessary works occurring to be done on Sunday. If so, these works of necessity are no violation of the Sabbath. Notice is to be taken also that the works forbidden are "servile" works, *i.e.*, such as fall to the lot of labourers, or are of a menial character. However, it must also be kept in view, that employments of a higher character, such as belong to the liberal professions, must be avoided so far as they would unduly interfere with the service of the Lord's Day.

Q. It is finally asked, "is the sin the greater by being committed on the Lord's Day?" and it is stated:

A. "Most certainly." Observe: Time, as well as place, affects the character of a sin. If the sin be committed in a holy place, it is the more sinful on that account: so, too, when committed on a day that is holy, it is the more grievous for that reason. (Respecting works forbidden on Sunday, relate example, *Numbers*, xv. 32).

Conclusion.

Sum up the answers, and observe, that the first three Commandments make up what is called the first Table of the Commandments, relating to God immediately; and the remaining seven make up the second Table, which relates to our neighbour and ourselves. Relate how the Commandments were written on tables of stone, as we read in *Exodus*. But we should transfer them "*to the fleshy tables of our hearts;*" and so love God with our whole heart, and our neighbours as ourselves, this being the sum of the Law and the Prophets.

N.B.—Relate the punishments for blasphemy of Core, Dathan and Abiron, *Numbers* xvi.; as also of Sennacherib, 4 *Kings* xix. 35.

In reference to perjury, relate of a woman who, having bought some vegetables in the market-place of a town in England, went off without paying for them. When followed and asked for payment, she said she had paid for the vegetables, and added a curse to the lie, saying: "May God strike me dead, if I did not pay for them." At once the hand of God fell upon her, and she was struck dead upon the spot, and as she lay dead the money was found in her hand. Every one was horrified, and a monument was erected on the place to record the dreadful fact, and to be a warning to all, for all times to come.

LESSON XVII.—(*continued*).

ON THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT.

Q. The seventeenth lesson of the Catechism is to have our attention again this evening, in order to explain the fourth Commandment, which is included with the second and third Commandments in the same lesson. This Commandment is announced in the words, "Honour thy father and thy mother," and we are asked, what do these words require of us?

A. In reply, we say, and the voice of nature proclaims, "that

we are to love, honour, and obey our parents and superiors." **Observe**: These are duties not only for children in early life, but in every period of life towards parents and superiors. First, we are to love them. They are to have our hearts, so that we partake of their joys and sorrows as if our own, and be one with them in our feelings and affections. We are also to honour them in word and act and general manner, displaying towards them an external reverence, which proceeds from a feeling of respect we have in the very centre of our hearts for them. We are also to obey them, complying promptly and cheerfully with their wishes, not only as they notify them to us, but as we presume them to be, thus anticipating the outward expression of them.

Q. Such being our duties towards parents and superiors, we are asked, "What are we forbidden in their regard?" and we answer:

A. "All contempt, stubbornness, ill-will, and disobedience to parents and superiors." For example, there is a person, who despises his parents or superiors, and does so either outwardly or inwardly; and here is another who shows stubbornness to his parents or superiors, or has any ill-will towards them, or shows them disobedience. Such a person is a transgressor against the fourth Commandment.

Q. But from children, the Catechism goes on to speak of parents, and asks: "What are their chief duties?"

A. We reply: "To provide for their children, to instruct them, and all others under their care, in the Christian Doctrine, and by every means in their power to lead them to God."

Observe: They are, in the first place, to provide for their children. This lesson nature teaches. The very beasts of the field and the birds of the air provide for their offspring, and parents would be more brutal than the brutes themselves, if they failed in this primary obligation of nature. And whilst they attend to the bodies and bodily welfare of their children, they must attend much more to their souls, and have them instructed in the Christian Doctrine, and by every means in their power lead them to God, this being the end of their creation.

Q. To encourage children to be dutiful to their parents, God has promised them a special reward even in this life. The Catechism asks, what this reward is? and answers:

A. "A long and happy life even in this world;" and this to be

the forerunner of a life of happiness for ever in the world to come.

Q. From speaking of children, the Catechism brings us on to the duties of subjects to the temporal powers, *i.e.*, to kings, princes, and all persons in lawful authority over us, and asks us, what are these duties?

A. In answer to this question, the Catechism quotes the words of the Holy Ghost, delivered by St. Paul: "*To be subject to them, and to honour and obey them, not only for wrath, but also for conscience' sake.*" (*Rom.* xiii. 5).

Observe: The Apostle is not satisfied with a reluctant submission, saying, "*not only for wrath*," but requires a submission from a sense of conscience.

Q. Besides this duty of submission, we are asked, "Does the Scripture require any other duties of subjects?" and we answer:

A. "Yes; *to pray for kings, and for all that are in high station; that we may lead a quiet and a peaceable life.*" (1 *Tim.* ii. 2).

Q. The Catechism goes on farther, and asks: "Is it sinful to resist or combine against the established authorities, or to speak with contempt or disrespect of those who rule over us?" and replies:

A. "Yes; it is sinful;" and St. Paul says: "*Let every soul be subject to higher powers. He that resisteth the power . . . resisteth the ordinance of God. And they that resist, purchase to themselves damnation.*" (*Rom.* xiii. 1, 2).

Observe: These are the words of God again spoken to us by St. Paul, from which we see, that to rise up against the regular authorities, who rule over us, is to rise up against the order of God Himself, and that, therefore, we would earn for ourselves damnation by so doing.

Q. The Catechism next proceeds to speak of masters, and asks: "What are their chief duties to their servants, apprentices, and others under their care?" The answer is very important.

A. It is, that they are bound "to lead them to God by word and example; to see that they be exact in their religious duties; to treat them with justice and humanity, and to correct and reprove them when necessary."

Observe: Masters and mistresses, observe your duties, as told you by your Catechism; you are to lead all those under your authority to God, *i.e.*, to serve God, and keep His Command-

ments; and this you are to do not only by word, but by your own example. You are also to see that they mind their religious duties, using your influence and authority with them to that effect. Likewise, you are to observe the duties of justice and humanity towards them, and, so far as may be needful, you are to correct and reprove them.

A. To inculcate these duties with the greater force the Catechism asks, "What St. Paul says with respect to masters," and gives the very words, which are:

Q. "*Masters do to your servants that which is just and equal, knowing that you also have a Master in heaven.*" (*Col.* iv. 1).

Observe: The Apostle not only lays down the obligation of being just and equal, *i.e.*, treating them, as they would wish themselves to be treated in the same position, but reminds them that they have also a Master in heaven, who will treat them as they treat those who are under them.

Q. This very important chapter of the Catechism closes by asking, "What are the chief duties of servants and apprentices to their masters?" and points them out by saying:

A. "To be obedient, respectful and faithful to them, to be diligent in their works and services, and not to suffer their masters to be injured in their property by any person."

Observe: Here are several duties pointed out for servants and apprentices, and all persons in such positions: 1st, They are to be obedient to those over them, complying with their orders and directions. 2ndly, They are to behave themselves in a respectful manner towards them. 3rdly, They are to be diligent in their work and service, feeling that they might as well be taking money out of their masters' pockets as defrauding them of the labour and service they owe them. 4thly, They must not allow any injury to be done to their masters, either as regards their persons or their properties.

Conclusion.

Sum up the answers consecutively, and **say** some words on the importance of the fourth Commandment, **observing** that it concerns all mankind at large, as we are all either parents or children, either in positions of authority or subjection, and that, therefore, we should all combine to observe the duties the Commandment prescribes, that we may thereby fulfil the will of the great Father of us all, who looks down upon us from heaven as His children, in the various positions

we occupy, according to the arrangement of His Divine Providence, making His sun to rise upon the good and the bad, and raining upon the just and the unjust. (*Matt.* v. 45).

EXAMPLES.

1. Dutiful and undutiful children. Parable, *Luke* xv. 11, &c.
2. Dutiful and undutiful parents. *Job* i. 5; Heli, 1 *Kings* ii. 24, &c.
3. Masters and servants. The Centurion and his servant, *Matt.* viii. 5, &c.

LESSON XVIII.

ON THE FIFTH, SIXTH, SEVENTH, AND EIGHTH COMMANDMENTS.

Q. The eighteenth lesson of the Catechism, which we are to make the subject of our instruction this evening, takes account of the fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth Commandments. We shall go through it so far as our time will permit. The fifth Commandment is announced in these words, "Thou shalt not kill," and we are asked, at once, what these words forbid?

A. We answer: "*All* wilful murder, quarrelling, fighting, hatred, anger, and revenge." Observe: *All* wilful murder. There are different kinds of murder, the murder of one's neighbour, the murder of one's self, and that sort of murder which is committed in duelling, all and each of which is a sin of the deepest dye against the natural law. The Catechism says not only murder, but "*wilful*" murder, whence we are to understand, that the taking away of human life, under certain circumstances, may be lawful, as, for instance, when one is sentenced to death by the sentence of a judge, also in legitimate warfare, in defence of one's own life, &c.

There is also murder from neglect, which may happen in the case of infants even before they are born.

With murder, the fifth Commandment forbids, as leading either nearly, or at a distance, to murder, the sins of fighting, quarrelling, hatred, anger, and revenge. Alas! how common are these sins, and how hateful they must be before God, who commands us to love our neighbour as ourselves, and who will take no service from us, or protestation of love, as long as we retain a feeling of anger or revenge against our fellow-being.

Q. We are further asked: "What else is forbidden by the fifth Commandment?" and we answer:

A. "All injurious words; giving scandal or bad example; and not to ask pardon of those whom we have offended." (*Matt.* v. 39).

Observe: We know that words are often more hurtful than blows, for, as the Scripture says, "they are sometimes like darts or weapons cast at us." (*Ps.* liv. 22). We have all had experience of this.

We are also to avoid giving scandal. Scandal here means any act or omission of duty, or word, that is to another the wilful occasion of sin. By scandal, we are guilty of murdering our neighbour, not, indeed, by the murder of his body, but by a murder infinitely more dreadful—the murder of his soul. Hence our Divine Lord says in the Gospel. (**Quote** *Matt.* xviii. 7, 8, 9).

Also the fifth Commandment condemns "not to ask pardon of those whom we have offended;" and if we be on bad terms with any one, and we be ready to offer sacrifice, *i.e.*, the highest act of religion to God, God would have us put off the sacrifice, and first make up with the neighbour. (**Quote** *Matt.* v. 23, 24; also 39, *et seq.*)

Q. From the fifth the Catechism brings us to the sixth Commandment, and asks us what is forbidden by it? and answers:

A. "All unchaste freedom with another's wife or husband." These words require no comment, and the crimes to which they refer, are so revolting to Christian modesty, that we will spare ourselves all observations upon them, it being enough to mention them, in order to excite our horror of them.

Q. We are, however, asked: "What else is forbidden by the sixth Commandment?"

A. And we reply: "All immodest looks, words, or actions, and everything that is contrary to chastity." (*Col.* iii. 5).

Observe: Some people are so ignorant, as to take account only of the grosser and more filthy violations of the sixth Commandment. Hence the Catechism finds it necessary to point out the sins just mentioned, "immodest looks, words, or actions, and everything that is contrary to chastity." David was betrayed by an immodest look into adultery first, and afterwards into murder; and our Saviour warns us: (**Quote** *Matt.* v. 28).

Words contrary to chastity fall also under this Commandment.

Such words as St. Paul tells us should not come from the mouth of a Christian. They are like the stench coming forth from a grave. They prove the heart, from which such words proceed, to be rotten and putrid before God.

Actions, of course, that is, all personal liberties, are forbidden. Alas! what hidden things of darkness will be brought to light on the last day.

Finally, we must avoid "everything contrary to chastity." Yes, everything, in thought, word, or deed. Yes, even thoughts deliberately indulged in, and wilfully consented to, are mortal sins, and it is from these thoughts that outward sins take their rise as from their source. This our Saviour distinctly points out to us, when he says in the Gospel: (**Quote** *Mark* vii. 21). Hence every one owes it to his own soul to keep a watch over his thoughts, and to cast away a bad thought the moment it occurs to him, as if it were a spark of fire coming directly from hell.

Q. We are finally asked: "Are immodest songs, discourses, novels, comedies, and plays, especially at wakes, forbidden by the sixth Commandment?"

A. "Yes;" the Catechism says, "and it is sinful to join in them, to encourage them, or to be present at them."

Observe: What detestable sources of immodesty have we here open before us! (**A word or two** *in condemnation of each, and finish by stating*) that it was the sins against the sixth Commandment, that made God protest in the court of heaven, that He was grieved for having made man; that it was these sins that brought down fire and brimstone on Sodom and Gomorrha, and that, as divines think, the most of the damned are damned on account of these sins, or, at least that there is scarcely a soul in hell, who has not sins of this kind to suffer for amongst whatever other sins he has brought with him to this place of woe.

Conclusion.

Recapitulate answers, and end by quoting *Phil.* iv. 8.

Examples respecting Fifth Commandment.

First. Cain, the first murderer; the blood of his murdered brother cried to heaven for vengeance; God cursed Cain, and set a mark upon him, that he might be known amongst mankind, as a wicked beast has a sign or mark set on him by the owner, that it may be known amongst the herd and avoided. (*Gen.* iv.)

Second. Our Divine Lord, 1 *Peter* ii. 23; *Luke* xxiii. 34; *Matt.* xviii. 21, 22.

Third. Joseph forgiving his brothers. (*Gen.* xlv.)

Fourth. St. Nicephorus and Sapricius. (*Butler's Lives of the Saints*, February 9th.)

EXAMPLES RESPECTING SIXTH COMMANDMENT.

The Deluge provoked by these sins. (*Gen.* vi.; Sodom, *Gen.* xix.; fact related in *Numb.* xxv.)

LESSON XVIII.—(*continued*).

ON THE SEVENTH AND EIGHTH COMMANDMENTS.

Q. We are to continue this evening our explanation of the eighteenth lesson of the Catechism, in order to treat of the seventh and eighth Commandments. The seventh Commandment says: "Thou shalt not steal;" and we are asked what is forbidden by this Commandment? We answer, in the first place:

A. "All unjust taking or keeping what belongs to another." Observe: First, *to take* a thing unjustly that belongs to another; this is against the seventh Commandment; 2ndly, *to keep* a thing unjustly that belongs to another; this is also forbidden by the seventh Commandment. But we must take notice of the word "unjustly," because it would not be unlawful to take a thing belonging to another, if we were sure that he would not object to our doing so, in case he knew it. Also the law may come in, and give us a right, and, of course, in such a case the property changes hands. We may also consider the case of extreme necessity; in such a case the rights of property give way to the necessity.

Q. But there are other sins forbidden by the seventh Commandment; and we are, therefore, asked: "What else is forbidden by the seventh Commandment?"

A. We answer: "All cheating in buying and selling, or any other injury done to our neighbour in his property." Observe: All cheating, for example, false weights or measures; all adul-

terations in things for sale; all overcharging, especially in taking advantage of the inexperience of purchasers, or the distress of the poor, who cannot pay at once, and must get credit.

There are various other ways of sinning against the seventh Commandment, but they may be summed up under the general statement of any injury done our neighbour in his property or his rights.

Q. From what is forbidden, the Catechism goes on to ask, "What is commanded by the seventh Commandment?" and we are to reply:

A. "To pay our lawful debts, and to give every one his own." **Observe:** We are to pay our lawful debts, that is, what we justly owe to another, or others; and we are to do so at the time agreed upon, or as soon as we can, if no time had been fixed. By delaying to do this, we should be guilty of keeping unjustly what belongs to another. We are, in a word, to give every one his own, for every one has a right to his own, and we should violate that right in not giving him his own.

Q. We are further asked: "What are they obliged to do who retain ill-gotten goods, or who have unjustly what belongs to another?" **Observe:** There are two classes of persons pointed out in this question: 1st, those who retain or keep ill-gotten goods; 2ndly, those who keep things that belong to another unjustly. In both cases the persons concerned are to restore the things so retained, or if they cannot restore the things themselves they are to restore their value in money, or some other way; and this they are to do as soon as they can, any unnecessary delay, if considerable, being an additional sin; and this obligation of restitution is so strict, that the sin cannot otherwise be forgiven, in or out of confession, if the restitution be possible. Also it is to be observed, that if impossible, *just now*, to the full amount, restitution should be made as far as it is possible, and the person concerned is to be resolved to restore the rest as soon as he can. It is a common maxim that a penny melts a pound, *i.e.*, keep a penny that belongs to another, you will find it will turn against you in your temporal concerns, and sooner or later you will find yourself greatly the worse of your wrong doings. Thus does it come round that "honesty is the best policy."

Relate the vision of Zacharias, v. 1, 2, 3, 4, **applying** the passage to the unjust man in general.

Q. We proceed now to the eighth Commandment, which says, "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour;" and we are asked the question: "What is forbidden by this Commandment?"

A. We say: "All false testimonies, rash judgments, and lies." Here are three distinct kinds of sins pointed out to us: 1st, to make a false statement to the disadvantage of our neighbour, more especially on oath, which would involve a double guilt, one guilt against religion on account of the oath, which would be perjury and sacrilege; and the other against justice towards our neighbour. 2ndly, we are forbidden to form rash judgments to the disadvantage of our neighbour, *i.e.*, judgments, for which we have not sufficient reason or ground; and thirdly, we are to avoid lie-telling as a sin, of which the devil is said to be in a special manner the father. (**Quote** *John* viii. 44).

Q. But we are asked: "If it be lawful to tell an innocent or jocose lie, or to tell a lie for a good purpose?" **Observe:** People are disposed to make excuses for telling lies; they say, a lie may sometimes be an innocent lie, sometimes it may be only a joke, and sometimes it may be for a good purpose. What are we to say to these excuses? We must be explicit in saying that—

A. "No lie can be lawful or innocent, and no motive, however good, can excuse a lie, because a lie is always sinful and bad in itself." (*John* viii. 44). **Observe:** These words of the Catechism are the language of all theology, telling us there can be no such thing as an innocent lie; that lies cannot be allowed in the way of joke, nor for any motive, were we to gain the world thereby; and the reason is simply this, that a lie is a thing bad in itself, and, therefore, always sinful. Hence, it is said, without exception, by the Holy Ghost, "*The mouth that belieth, killeth the soul*" (*Wisdom* i. 11), and "*Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord.*" (*Prov.* xii. 22).

Q. We are further asked, "What else is forbidden by the eighth Commandment?" We are taught to answer:

A. "Backbiting, calumny, detraction, and all words and speeches hurtful to our neighbour's honour or reputation." **Observe:** Here are several sins brought under our notice. 1st, "Backbiting," that is, saying of our neighbour behind his back, what one would not say before his face; 2ndly, Calumny, that is, saying what is untrue, and, at the same time, to the disadvantage of our neighbour; 3rdly, Detraction, that is, saying

what is true, but is nevertheless hurtful to the character or reputation of our neighbour; 4thly, All words whatever that would be injurious to our neighbour in his honour or good name.

Q. From what is forbidden, the Catechism goes on to ask, "What is commanded by this Commandment?" and replies:

A. "To speak of others with justice and charity, as we should be glad they would speak of us, and to witness the truth in all things." **Observe**: There are both justice and charity concerned in what we say of our neighbours. First, as to justice, we know that a good name, as the Scripture tells us, is better than much riches; and it is often a greater injustice to damage a man in his good name than in his property. Charity is also concerned, because no one would like to have his good name gnawed to pieces under the teeth of any one. One rule must, therefore, be, to speak of others as we would wish others to speak of us, and to witness the truth in all things.

Q. Finally, the Catechism winds up the eighth Commandment by asking: "What must they do, who have given false witness against a neighbour, or who have spoken ill of him, or injured his character in any respect?" We are to reply:

A. "They must repair the injury done, as far as they are able, and make him satisfaction, by restoring his good name as soon as possible, otherwise the sin will not be forgiven them." It is just as when a person has injured his neighbour in his property, he must repair that injury as well as he can, otherwise it is in vain for him to look for forgiveness of his sin before God. He is also to repair the injury as soon as he can, otherwise the delay would aggravate his crime.

Conclusion.

Recapitulate answers, and **observe** how the seventh Commandment is about the property of our neighbour, whilst the eighth has his reputation or character in view; and **exhort** to keep our hands innocent in the one case, and our tongue in the other, finishing with the words (*James* i. 26; and iii. 2).

Examples.

1st. *Restitution.* It is related of a certain man, who had acquired a large fortune by unjust means, that when he was dying, his confessor required him to make restitution, but he refused, saying: "If I do, what is to become of my children? I cannot leave them in poverty."

He was dying of a cancer, and the confessor said to him: "I know a cure for your disease, but it is a very dear one." "O, no matter," said the other, "even if it cost a thousand pounds, let me have it. What is it?" "It is," said the confessor, "to get some friend to lay his hand on a frying pan, and to keep it there until a certain quantity of dripping will have come from it; let the dripping be then taken and poured upon your cancer, and it will be cured. Have you a friend to submit to this suffering on your account?" The sick man thought of his nearest and dearest friends, and he called the eldest son first to his bed-side, and asked him if he would undergo the ordeal proposed. He declined. Then the father called on another and another of his children, but found none of them would agree to suffer the torture required. The confessor then turned to him and said. "And you are going to hell for all eternity for these children, one of whom would not keep his hand for a quarter of an hour on a frying pan on your account." The appeal was irresistible. The dying man ordered a new will to be made at once, giving away all his property to the proper owners—to those to whom he owed restitution.

Refer also to the example of Zacheus (*Luke* xix.)

Example of false testimony, Achab (3 *Kings* xxi. 8, *et seq.*)

Example of backbiting: St. Augustine had these words set up in his drawing-room in large letters:—

"This board allows no vile detractor place,
Whose tongue shall charge the absent with disgrace."

Example against lies, and dissembling, Eleazer. (2 *Mach.* vi. 18. *et seq.*)

LESSON XIX.

ON THE NINTH AND TENTH COMMANDMENTS.

Q. We are to occupy ourselves this evening with the ninth and tenth Commandments of God. The ninth Commandment says: "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife;" and the Catechism asks us: "What is forbidden by this Commandment?" It answers by saying:

A. "All immodest thoughts and desires, and wilful pleasures in them. **Observe**: The sixth Commandment forbids all acts contrary to chastity and holy purity. The ninth Commandment goes further, and, entering into the mind of every Christian,

forbids "all immodest thoughts and desires, and wilful pleasures in them," according to the words of our Saviour: "*From the heart come forth evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false testimonies, blasphemies.*" (*Matt.* xv. 19).

Q. But the Catechism goes on to inquire, if besides immodest thoughts and desires, and wilful pleasures in them, there be anything else forbidden by the ninth Commandment, and answers:

A. Yes; "all immediate occasions of immodest thoughts and desires," and it proceeds to ask:

Q. "What are the immediate occasions of immodest thoughts and desires?" to which we are taught to reply:

A. "Unchaste words and discourses, immodest books and pictures, and all amusements dangerous to chastity." **Observe: A word on each.**

Q. And that nothing may be omitted in so important a Commandment, we are further asked: "What else may be deemed immediate occasions of immodest thoughts and desires?" and we answer:

A. "Lascivious looks and touches, idleness, bad company, all excess in eating and drinking, and whatever tends to inflame the passions." **Observe** on each: 1st. Lascivious touches, that is, all freedom in the way of unchaste embracings, handlings, or personal liberties of any kind having an immodest tendency. 2ndly. Lascivious looks, that is, looks prompted by unchaste thoughts from within. 3rdly. Idleness, which is always the mother of evil, but especially of sins such as the ninth Commandment treats of. 4thly. Excess in eating and drinking; drinking especially intoxicating drinks. Such excesses are to cast fuel on the fire of corrupt nature. Lastly, everything is forbidden by the ninth Commandment, that would have the effect of inflaming the corrupt passions of human nature.

Q. But it may occur to some persons to say, that perhaps thoughts, mere thoughts, without any intention or desire of following them up by any sinful act, are not unlawful: hence we are asked the question: "Is it sinful to have unchaste thoughts, when there is no intention or desire to indulge them by any criminal action?" and the Catechism distinctly answers:

A. "They are always very dangerous, and when entertained deliberately and with pleasure, they defile the soul like criminal actions." **Observe**: A thought may come and pass away, like a thing that comes before our eyes, and immediately goes out

of sight; such thoughts are not sinful, because they are not entertained deliberately—that is, they are not kept in the mind after the mind has noticed them; but if they are so kept in the mind, or if, in other words, they are entertained deliberately and with pleasure, "they defile the soul," destroying therein the image of God and producing the image of Satan in its stead, in the same way as criminal actions, and this is so true, that our Saviour expressly tells us a person may be guilty of adultery in his heart alone by bad thoughts and desires. Hence the moment such a thought comes before the mind, it is to be cast off in the same way as a person would cast away a spark of fire that would fall upon his hand.

Q. The Catechism proceeds to the tenth Commandment, which is announced in these words: "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's goods." **Observe**: The seventh Commandment forbids us doing any harm to our neighbour in his temporal concerns or interests; but the tenth Commandment goes to the root, and the Catechism asks: "What is forbidden by it?" It answers:

A. "All covetous thoughts and unjust desires of our neighbour's goods or profits." **Observe**: When Eve looked at the forbidden fruit, she coveted it, and was thus led to reach forth her hand for it, and eat it. So it happens when a person does any wrong to his neighbour. He is at first tempted to covet what belongs to his neighbour, and the coveting desire leads him on to act, so that to prevent the act, we must get rid of the covetous desire, when it occurs to us, of anything belonging to our neighbour in his goods or property.

Q. Having gone over the Commandments in detail, the Catechism asks: "To how many Commandments may the Ten Commandments be reduced?" and answers:

A. That they can be reduced to these two principal Commandments, which are the two great precepts of charity: *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with all thy strength and with all thy mind, and thy neighbour as thyself. This do, and thou shalt live.* (*Luke* x.; *Mark* xii.) **Observe**: The Commandments were given to Moses on two tables or slabs of stone; one contained three Commandments, and all three relating to God immediately and directly. The other contained seven, which relate all to our neighbour. Now, it is certain if we love God as we ought, we will act towards Him as we ought; and if we love our neigh-

bour as we ought, we will act towards him likewise as we ought; consequently, the love of God, and the love of our neighbour, comprise in a summary form the whole of the Ten Commandments.

Q. But to inform us who our neighbour is, the Catechism asks the question: "Who is our neighbour?" and answers:

A. "Mankind of every description, and without exception of persons, even those who injure us or differ from us in religion."

Observe: The Catechism makes no exception on any account. People may differ from us in religion—no matter; they are included in the Commandment of loving our neighbour as ourselves. They may have injured us—no matter; our Saviour is most distinct in telling us we must love even our enemies; we must do good to them that hate us, and pray for them that persecute and calumniate us.

Relate the parable of the good Samaritan, **laying stress** on the Samaritan being of a different religion from the Jews; but that, nevertheless, he acted in the manner the parable relates towards the Jew; and our Divine Lord praises him, and holds up his conduct as an example of how we should act towards those who differ from us in religion or country. (*Luke* x.)

Q. But to reduce to practice the Commandment of loving our neighbour as ourselves, we are asked: "How am I to love my neighbour as myself?" and we answer:

A. "*As you would that men should do to you, do you also to them in like manner.* (*Luke* vi. 31). This is the explanation of our Divine Lord Himself, and of course it is infallible.

Q. However, for further explanation, the Catechism would ask: "What particular duties are required of us by that rule?" and the answer is:

A. "Never to injure our neighbour by word or deed in his person, property, or character, to wish well to him, and to pray for him, and always to assist him, as far as we are able, in his spiritual and corporal necessities."

A word upon each of these duties. 1st, Never to injure in word, by saying anything of him we would not like to be said of ourselves 2ndly, Never to injure him in act or deed, by doing anything to him we would not like to be done to ourselves. 3rdly, We must not injure him in his person, property, or character. 4thly, We must wish him well, and even pray for him; and, finally, we must assist him, as far as it may be in our

power, in all that regards his spiritual and corporal necessities, the necessities of soul and body.

Q. The chapter closes by asking what we have already anticipated: "Am I obliged to love my enemies?" and answers:

A. "Most certainly," and quotes the authority of our Divine Lord, which we should ever recollect, for His words present to us a summary of the Law and the Prophets, as He Himself says: "*Love your enemies, do good to them that hate you. Bless them that curse you, and pray for them that persecute and calumniate you.*" (*Luke* vi.; *Matt.* v.)

Conclusion.

Summarise by repeating the answers in a continuous recital, and by saying that having perused the Commandments of God, we have not to ask, like the young man in the Gospel, "what we are to do to obtain eternal life?" The answer will for ever remain included in the words of our Saviour Himself, "*Keep the Commandments.*" They are the gate, and no other gate is given to us to enter by, in order to attain our destiny, the end of our creation, the kingdom of God's glory, and of His angels and saints, &c.

LESSON XX.

ON THE PRECEPTS OF THE CHURCH.

Q. From the Commandments of God the Catechism leads us on to the Precepts of the Church. They are chiefly six in number, viz.:

1st. To hear Mass on Sundays and all Holidays of obligation.

2nd. To fast and abstain on the days commanded.

3rd. To confess our sins at least once a year.

4th. To receive worthily the Blessed Eucharist at Easter, or within the time appointed; that is, from Ash-Wednesday to Ascension Thursday, or where it is so permitted, to the Octave Day of SS. Peter and Paul.

5th. To contribute to the support of our pastors.

6th. Not to solemnize marriage at the forbidden times, nor to marry persons within the forbidden degrees of kindred, or otherwise prohibited by the Church; nor clandestinely.

After repeating these six great Precepts of the Church, the

Catechism returns upon the first, and asking: "What are our chief duties on Sundays and kept holidays?" replies:

A. "To hear Mass devoutly; and in every other respect to keep them holy." **Observe**: The Catechism would not have us be content with merely hearing Mass, but requires we should hear it *devoutly*, in order to comply with the Precept. Hence it is to be feared that several fail in the fulfilment of the Precept, by being present only in bodily attendance, allowing themselves to be looking about, or to have their minds full of distracting thoughts, while Mass is going on. Of such people God complains, by saying: "*They honour Me with their lips, but their hearts are far from Me.*" (*Isai.* xxix. 13). Moreover, besides hearing Mass on Sundays and holidays, we are further required to keep them holy, as the Catechism says, "in every other respect," as is explained under the third Commandment of God.

Q. But with respect to hearing Mass especially, the Catechism asks: "If it is a mortal sin not to hear Mass on a Sunday or kept holiday?" and it tells us emphatically:

A. "It is a mortal sin if the omission be culpable; and fathers and mothers, masters and mistresses, and all such persons sin grievously, if, without sufficient cause, they hinder children, servants, or any others subject to them, from hearing Mass on a Sunday or kept holiday." **Observe**: There may be a sufficient cause: one may be sick, or engaged in some indispensable duty of some kind, and the Church does not require a person to hear Mass when hindered by any impediment of this kind. But, otherwise, it would be a mortal sin to omit hearing Mass on a Sunday or kept holiday, that is a holiday of obligation; and, on this account, we must say of masters and mistresses, as well as fathers and mothers, that they are guilty of mortal sin, if they hinder, without sufficient cause, those who are under them from hearing Mass on Sundays and holidays of obligation; and we ground this decision on the words of the Apostle: "*If any man have not care of his own, and especially of those of his house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.*" 1 *Tim.* v. 8. **(Explain text.)**

Q. The Catechism goes on to inquire: "What we mean by holidays?" and after replying, "That they are certain solemn days ordered by the Church to be kept holy," it asks: "Why were holidays instituted by the Church?" We answer:

A. "To recall to our minds, with praise and thanksgiving,

the great mysteries of religion, and the virtues and rewards of the Saints, and that we might glorify God on them." **Observe:** Here are three reasons set forth for the institution and celebration of holidays: 1st, To recall to our minds the great mysteries of religion; for example, the Nativity of our Divine Lord, His Circumcision, His Resurrection, and His Ascension, &c. These, and other great mysteries, are kept in view by the festivals we celebrate in their honour, which we should do "with praise and thanksgiving" to God. 2ndly, There are other feasts in honour of the Blessed Virgin, and certain of the Saints. These we celebrate in order to bring before our minds the virtues and rewards of the Saints; their virtues, that we may imitate them; and their rewards, that we may aspire to a participation of their happiness. In the third place, we have God's honour and glory in view, as the principal object the Church is concerned for in their celebration.

Q. From the first Precept of the Church we proceed to the second, which is: "To fast and abstain on the days commanded. And we are asked: "What are we obliged to by this Commandment?" We answer:

A. "We are to give part of the year to fast and abstinence." (*Matt.* vi. 16. 18). The Catechism says "part of the year," that is, certain appointed times and days within the year, for fasting and abstinence; because, if we were left to ourselves, we would likely let the year pass on without taking any time at all for either fasting or abstinence. Besides, by appointing special times, the faithful encourage each other by good example, and a holy violence is done to heaven by their combined mortifications and penances.

Q. Fast days differ from days of abstinence, and to bring out this difference we are asked: "What we mean by fast days?" we answer:

A. "Certain days on which we are allowed but one meal, and forbidden flesh meat." In explanation of this answer we are to observe, that in addition to the one meal, the law of fasting permits what is called a collation, that is, some small allowance of food, to be taken at another time of the day. The quality of food to be allowed at the collation is fasting food. Also it is to be observed that in Lent a privilege is granted by the Holy See for the use of flesh meat, on certain days, as notified by the Bishop in each diocese.

Q. Then as to abstinence we are asked: "What do you mean by days of abstinence?" We answer:

A. "Certain days on which we are forbidden to eat flesh meat, but are allowed the usual number of meals; for example, all Fridays during the year. Friday is a day of abstinence, because we are forbidden the use of flesh meat, though allowed the usual number of meals.

Q. We are asked: "Why the Church commands us to fast and abstain?" The answer is:

A. "To mortify our sinful passions and appetites, and to satisfy for our sins by doing penance for them." Observe: Here are two reasons assigned for fasting and abstinence. The first is, to mortify our sinful passions and appetites, because there is a continual war going on within us between these passions and appetites on one side and the dictates of reason and religion on the other, and our salvation depends on which side the victory will turn. "*If*," says St. Paul, "*you live according to the flesh, you shall die: but if by the spirit you mortify the deeds of the flesh, you shall live.*" (*Rom.* viii. 13). This work of mortification is the first thing the Church has in view in prescribing fasting and abstinence. The second object is to do penance, and thereby satisfy for our sins. The Church would wish to take account of the large debt we owe to the justice of God on account of our sins, and would have us diminish the debt by punishing ourselves by fasting and abstinence.

Q. Finally, the Catechism asks, "Why the Church commands us to abstain from flesh meat on Fridays?" and replies:

A. "In honour, and in commemoration of our Saviour's death." We should never forget the passion and death of our Divine Lord, and we should unceasingly honour them. Therefore the Church brings this great mystery every week before the minds of the faithful, making it somewhat a day of mourning by abstaining from meat on that day.

State how, instead of shortening human life, fasting and abstinence on the contrary lengthen it, and mention the following examples: St. Paul, the first hermit, lived one hundred and fifteen years; St. Paphnucius, St. Sabas, St. John of Egypt, over ninety; St. Antony, one hundred and five; St. John the Silent, St. Theodosius Abbot, St. James the Hermit, in Persia, one hundred and four.

Observe that the ordinary food of these holy men was bread

and water with raw vegetables, and that they ate but once a day, and that they lived in hot climates, where people live generally a shorter time than in cold countries.

CONCLUSION.

Recite the answers consecutively, and end by saying, that the due observance of the feasts and fasts of the Church lift up our minds on high, so as "*to have our conversation in heaven; whence also we look for the Saviour, our Lord Jesus Christ, who will reform the body of our lowness, made like to the body of His glory, according to the operation whereby also He is able to subdue all things unto Himself.*" (*Phil.* iii. 20, 21).

LESSON XXI.

THE PRECEPTS OF THE CHURCH—CONTINUED.

Q. We proceed this evening to explain the third and remaining Precepts of the Church, and we ask at once : "What means the Commandment of confessing our sins at least once a year ?" the Catechism replies :

A. It means, that we are threatened with very severe penalties by the Church, if we do not go to confession within the year." **Observe:** The Commandment supposes the case of a person, who would be disposed to go to confession very seldom, and the Church would say to such a person, if you let a year pass without going to confession, I will inflict upon you the severest penalties.

Q. A further question supposes a person who has made a bad confession, and who may be tempted to think he has complied, nevertheless, with the Precept. The Catechism therefore asks : "Does a bad confession satisfy the obligation of confessing our sins once a year ?" and says in reply :

A. "So far from it, that it renders us more guilty by the additional crime of sacrilege." **Observe:** He has not fulfilled the Precept, but has added the fearful sin of sacrilege to his other guilt by his bad confession.

Q. But the question then arises, "If it be sufficient to go but once a year to confession," as is the case with so many Christians ? We reply :

A. "No:" and we add, that "Frequent confession is necessary for all those who fall into mortal sin, or who desire to advance in virtue." **Observe:** There are two reasons for frequent confession. The first is for those who have the misfortune of falling into mortal sin. Their miserable condition is, that, any day, hour, or moment, the thread of their life may be snapped, and that very day, that very hour, that very moment, their soul is plunged into hell. Consequently, they should run at once to confession, to have their sin remitted by the Sacrament of Penance. The second reason is to advance in virtue. We see that good and holy people go frequently to confession, and they are thereby strengthened against temptation, and helped to ascend from virtue to virtue on the way to heaven.

Q. Finally, we are asked: "At what age are children obliged to go to confession?" and we are told:

A. "As soon as they are capable of committing sin, that is, when they come to the use of reason, which is generally supposed to be about the age of seven years." **Observe:** Confession being the remedy of sin, children are to go to confession when they are capable of committing sin, which is generally when they are arrived at the age of seven years, as they attain the use of reason generally at that age.

Q. From the third we are led on to the fourth Precept of the Church, which is, "To receive worthily the Blessed Eucharist at Easter, or within the time appointed;" and we are asked the question: "Where, and from whom, are we to receive the Blessed Eucharist at Easter?"

A. We reply, "In our own parish, and from our own pastor." **Observe,** Easter Communion is strictly a parochial duty under the jurisdiction of the Parish Priest, and therefore it must be received from him, or some other of the parochial clergy representing him.

Q. We are then asked, "At what age are children obliged to receive the Blessed Eucharist?" and we say with the Catechism:

A. "As soon as they are able to discern the Body of the Lord: that is, when they understand what the Blessed Eucharist is, and how they should be prepared to receive it worthily. **Observe,** "As soon as they are able to discern the body of the Lord," as St. Paul expresses it, that is, as soon as they understand what the Blessed Eucharist is, and know how they are otherwise to prepare themselves for the worthy receiving of so great a mystery.

Q. The Catechism goes on to ask: "What punishment has the Church decreed against those who neglect to receive the Blessed Eucharist at Easter?" and we are bound to answer:

A. "They are to be excluded from the house of God whilst living, and deprived of Christian burial when they die." **Observe:** In effect, they are to be excommunicated living and dead. This is the law of the Church, enacted in one of her General Councils, the fourth Council of Lateran; and if for reasons which appear good to herself, she does not actually inflict these rigorous penalties, the Bishops are empowered to inflict them, and are ready to do so, when urgent reasons require it. It is, therefore, for every one, who neglects his Easter duty, to consider that by such neglect alone he is in a state of rebellion against the Church.

Q. We proceed to the fifth Commandment, which says: "To contribute to the support of our pastors," and we are asked: "Are we obliged in conscience and justice to contribute to the support of our pastors?" We answer distinctly:

A. "Yes; and by a Divine precept also; St. Paul says: "*So the Lord ordained, that they who preach the Gospel should live by the Gospel.* (1 *Cor.* ix. 14). **Observe:** We rest this obligation not simply on the authority of the Church, but, moreover, on the Divine law, as St. Paul lays it down so plainly in these words; and even reason itself points out that "*The labourer is worthy of his hire,*" as our Divine Lord Himself declared, when He sent forth His Apostles to preach, announcing in these words a maxim of the natural law, which He applies to the ministry of His Church. (*Matt.* x. 10).

Q. We come finally to the sixth Precept of the Church, expressed in these words, "Not to solemnize marriage at the forbidden times, nor to marry persons within the forbidden degrees of kindred, or otherwise prohibited by the Church; nor clandestinely." **Observe:** From the beginning of the world, marriage or matrimony was a religious rite, having been instituted by God Himself in the Garden of Paradise. It so continued till the coming of our Saviour, who raised it to the dignity and sanctity of a Sacrament, making it one of the seven Sacraments of the New Law, which He confided to the Church for administration. It is invested with several conditions, which are called impediments, and these impediments are of two classes, some of them rendering marriage simply unlawful, whilst others render

it null and void. These impediments must be kept in view by persons getting married. However, the Catechism directs special attention to the impediment of clandestinity, and asks: "If a marriage, contracted with this impediment be a valid and good marriage."

A. It answers: "Where the decree of the Council of Trent, which condemns and annuls clandestine marriages, has been duly published (as in Ireland), a clandestine marriage is no marriage; it is null and void in the sight of God, and of His Church." **Observe**: The impediment of clandestinity having been enacted by the Church, it was necessary to have it published before it could become binding, and this condition was embodied in the law itself. Hence it was only partially binding in Ireland for a considerable time, but it is at present in force throughout the whole country.

Q. It becomes, therefore, important to understand what is a clandestine marriage; and the Catechism tells us that:

A. "Every marriage of Catholics is declared clandestine by the Church, at which the Parish Priest of the man or woman is not present, or another Priest by his leave, or leave of the Bishop, with two or three witnesses." **Observe**: To escape, therefore, the impediment of clandestinity, two things are necessary: first, the presence of the Parish Priest of either of the parties, or the presence of the Bishop of the diocese, or of a Priest authorised by either of the Parish Priests or Bishop; secondly, that likewise there should be two witnesses besides.

Q. We are asked: "Do the Precepts of the Church oblige under pain of mortal sin?" And we are told distinctly:

A. "Yes;" and we quote the words of our Divine Lord in proof of the assertion: "*He that will not hear the Church, let him be to thee as the heathen and publican.*" (*Luke* x. 16; *Matt.* xviii. 17).

Q. The chapter closes by asking: "What is necessary to keep the Commandments of God and of His Church?" And we answer:

A. "The grace of God, which is to be obtained chiefly by prayer and the Sacraments." **Observe**: Our Saviour tells us, "*without Me you can do nothing*" (*John* xv. 5); that is, without His assistance, which means the grace of God, we cannot fulfil the Commandments.

Conclusion.

Recite the answers consecutively, and conclude by saying that the observance of the Commandments of God and His Church lights up for us the blessed hope of coming to Mount Sion, &c. (*Heb.* xii. 22, 23).

Anecdote.

Relate the example of Daniel and his companions (*Dan.* i.), or that of the seven brothers and their mother (2 *Mach.* vii.), or that of the forty martyrs (*Breviary*, 10th March), or that of the seven brothers (*Breviary*, 10th July), to show the fidelity with which we should observe the laws of the Church.

LESSON XXII.

ON PRAYER.

Q. The twenty-second chapter of the Catechism is to engage our attention this evening. The preceding chapter ended by saying, that we obtain God's grace chiefly by means of prayer and the Sacraments. Therefore, this chapter begins by asking: "What is prayer?" and it answers:

A. "An elevation of the soul to God, to adore Him, to bless His Holy Name, to praise His goodness, and to return Him thanks for all His benefits." Observe: In this answer the nature of prayer is pointed out. It is an elevation, that is, a raising up of the soul, to God, for the following purposes: 1st, to adore Him, that is, to acknowledge His supreme dominion over us, and our entire dependence on Him; 2ndly, to bless His Holy Name, admiring His Supreme Majesty, His divine perfections, and His greatness, goodness, and mercy in all His works in heaven and on earth, and throughout all creation; 3rdly, to praise His goodness, that goodness the length and breadth, the height and depth of which are beyond all comprehension; 4thly, to thank Him for His unceasing benefits, which, as a most beneficent Father, He pours down upon us.

Q. Besides this description of prayer, we are asked: "If it be anything else?"

A. We answer: "Yes; it is an humble petition to God for

all the necessaries of soul and body." **Observe**: We are in constant need of necessaries, both for soul and body, to such a degree, that the Royal Psalmist, speaking to God, says: "*I am a beggar and poor: the Lord is careful of me.*" (*Ps.* xxxix. 18). We therefore direct our petitions to Him, who is the Giver of all good gifts, asking Him to have pity on us, and come to our aid, according to our wants of soul and body.

Q. Then prayer being such a duty, we inquire: "When should we pray?" and we are told:

A. "Christ Himself says, *we ought always to pray.*" (*Luke* xviii. 1).

Q. But then it is asked, how can this be done? "How can we always pray?" we answer:

A. "By offering to God all our thoughts, words, and actions; by keeping ourselves in the state of grace, and praying at certain times. **Observe**: In the answer three things are pointed out to us: 1st, That to pray always, we are to offer to God all our thoughts, words, and actions. This we should do as soon as we awake in the morning, and when rising, and more especially still, at our morning prayers: also afterwards, now and then, in the course of the day, we ought to raise our hearts to God, who never loses sight of us. 2ndly, We should constantly keep ourselves in the state of grace, that is, free from mortal sin; for God does not hear sinners, unless they turn to Him with sorrow for their sad condition. 3rdly. We must pray formally; that is, we must practise the holy exercise of prayer at certain times.

Q. Thus being told, that we are to pray at certain times, we naturally ask: "At what particular times should we pray?" and we answer:

A. "On Sundays and holidays, every morning and every night, and in all dangers, temptations, and afflictions." **Observe**: Here are the special occasions for formal prayers; 1st, we are to pray on Sundays and holidays. These being days of prayer, we cannot fulfil the obligation of sanctifying them, unless we devote a considerable part of them to prayer. 2ndly, We should say our morning and evening prayers. In the morning, we do not know what is before us during the day, and we should by prayer put ourselves into the hands of God, to keep us from hurt and harm both of body and soul for the day; and also, before going to bed, we should pray again, to thank God for His care of us during the day. We should, moreover, beg His

pardon for our failings and faults, as if we were to die that night, thinking how sleep is the image of death. O, how edifying is it to see a family, with father and mother at their head, all closing the day with family prayer. Surely our Saviour is in the midst of such a family, according to His own gracious assurance: "*Where there are two or three gathered together in My Name, there am I in the midst of them.*" (*Matt.* xviii. 20). Again, we should pray in all our dangers, thinking that God is always present, and ready to reach forth His all-powerful hand to rescue us, if we only call upon Him at the moment. Also in our temptations, whether from the devil immediately, or our own corrupt nature, or some external cause, we should immediately have recourse to God by prayer, saying to Him, "O God, come to my assistance; O Lord, make haste to help me," or some short prayer, when the temptation assails us. O, how many sins would be avoided if, when we find ourselves attacked by temptation, we had immediate recourse to God.

Q. The Catechism goes on to ask: "After what manner should we pray?" and answers:

A. "With all possible attention and devotion, and in a respectful posture on bended knees." **Observe:** Here is the manner in which we should pray. What more natural? See a beggar asking an alms; see his earnestness. There is nothing else before his mind. See his respectful posture, how he bends his body, how he bares his head. This is the way in which we should address ourselves to God in prayer, with all possible attention, and on bended knees, unless in case of infirmity or sickness, when we may take whatever position we please, provided it be respectful towards God.

Q. But prayer, to be acceptable to God, requires, moreover, some conditions, and the Catechism asks: "What conditions are necessary to render our prayers acceptable?" and answers:

A. "We must offer them with an humble and contrite heart, with fervour and perseverance, with confidence in God's goodness, with resignation to His will, and in the name of Jesus Christ." **Observe:** We are requested to pray with an humble and contrite heart, for we have the assurance of God Himself, that an humble and contrite heart He will never despise.

In the second place, we must pray with fervour, otherwise we give reason to Almighty God to complain of us, as He did of the Jews. "*This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me.*" (*Matt.* xv. 8).

In the third place, we are to pray with perseverance. If God were to grant our petitions all at once, they might be the less prized by us. He therefore delays granting them in many instances, stimulating thereby our earnestness, and yielding in the end to our perseverance. We have many such instances in the Scripture, particularly the Canaanean woman. (*Matt.* xv. which relate.)

In the next place, we are to pray with all confidence in God's mercy and goodness, because His mercy and goodness have no bounds, and He has the heart of a most tender Father towards us, and can do everything He sees us in want of, by a mere act of His Almighty will.

Also, we must pray with resignation. If a child ask his father to give him a knife or a sword, the father refuses, because he fears the child might do himself harm. In the same way, we do not often know what would be good or bad for us, and therefore we ought to leave it to God to grant or refuse; that is, we should be resigned to His most holy will, feeling that He knows best what would be for our good.

In the last place, we are to pray in the name of Jesus Christ. He is our great Mediator and Advocate, and it is by Him and His merits that we can approach the throne of Divine mercy.

Q. These conditions being required to make our prayers agreeable to God, we are asked: "What do you think of those, who at their prayers think not of God, or of what they say?" we are told:

A. "If their distractions be wilful, their prayers, instead of pleasing God, offend Him, and are an abomination to Him." Observe: Distractions are of two kinds, wilful, such as we can put away, and distractions that we have against our will, and come upon us in spite of our best efforts to keep them away. These latter do us no harm, and do not hinder the effect of our prayers. But as to the wilful distractions, they are displeasing to God, who has Himself declared a curse upon him "*that doth the work of God deceitfully*" (*Jer.* xlviii. 10); and prayer is, as every one knows, the work of God in a special manner. Of prayers said in this manner, St. Augustine, speaking in his own energetic way, says, that "the barking of dogs is more pleasing to the Almighty than such prayers." How careful, therefore, should we not be to rid our mind of distractions in our prayers!

Q. After laying down the conditions of prayer, the Catechism

asks: "What prayers are most recommended to us?" and it replies:

A. "The Lord's Prayer, the Hail Mary, the Apostles' Creed, and the Confiteor, or general confession."

Q. And we are further asked: "Does the Church also recommend the Acts of Faith, Hope, and Charity?" and we say:

A. "Yes, most earnestly; they are an excellent form of prayer, and remind us of our chief duties to God."

Q. This answer suggests, at once, the further question: "What are our chief duties to God?" We reply:

A. "To believe in Him, to hope in Him, and to love Him." **Observe**: By Acts of faith we exercise our belief in God; by Acts of hope we exercise ourselves in hoping in His Divine goodness, love, and mercy; and by Acts of charity we exercise ourselves in loving God.

Q. We are finally asked the reason: "Why do we make an Act of Contrition before the Acts of Faith, Hope, and Charity?" The reason is:

A. "To obtain pardon of our sins, and thereby to render our prayers more acceptable to God, and more beneficial to ourselves." **Observe**: Sin is the great obstacle to God's grace. Therefore, we should approach Him with sorrow for having offended His Adorable Majesty, especially when we endeavour to raise our hearts to Him, to believe in Him, to hope in Him, and to love Him; that is, to make acts of Faith, Hope, and Charity.

Relate, as examples of the efficacy of prayer, Moses praying on the mountain (*Exod.* xvii.), or Josue (x.), or Elias (*James* v. 17, or Peter released from prison (*Acts* xii.)

Conclusion.

Recite the answers consecutively, and end with the remarkable words of St. Liguori: "I say, and I repeat, and I will repeat as long as I live, that our salvation depends altogether on prayer, on which account all writers in their books, all preachers in their sermons, and all confessors in the tribunal of penance, should inculcate nothing with greater zeal than the practice of continual prayer; and they should constantly exclaim, pray, and never cease to pray, for if you pray, your salvation is secured, and if you neglect prayer, your perdition is inevitable.

LESSON XXIII.

ON THE LORD'S PRAYER AND THE HAIL MARY.

We are to explain this evening the twenty-third lesson or chapter of the Catechism. It treats of the Lord's Prayer and the Hail Mary These prayers are in the mouth of every Christian. We repeat them constantly; and it is important that we know their meaning, in order that our minds and hearts may accompany the words, of which these prayers are composed. We therefore begin with the question:

Q. "Who made the Lord's Prayer?" and we answer:

A. "That it was Jesus Christ Himself." (**Recite** *account as in St. Matt.* vi. 9, &c.)

Q. The prayer begins with the words, "Our Father;" consequently, we are asked: "Whom do you call 'Our Father,' when you say the Lord's Prayer?"

A. We reply: "Almighty God, who is the common Father of all." **Observe:** In the Old Law God was generally called the Lord, but in the New Law, which is more a law of love, our Divine Saviour teaches us to call Him by the amiable title of Father. He is our Father in three different ways: first, by creation; secondly, by adoption; and thirdly, by conservation. We have also to observe that we do not say, My Father, but "Our Father," in order that we may understand that we are all members of the same great family of mankind, brothers and sisters of one another, under God as our universal Father; and that we should love one another. and pray for one another, when we appear before God in prayer. We are also taught to say, "Who art in heaven," that we may lift up our hearts from this valley of tears to that abode of happiness, where God displays Himself in all His glory to the Angels and Saints.

Q. The first Petition of the Lord's Prayer is, "Hallowed be Thy name;" and we are asked what these words mean? We reply:

A. By these words "we beg that God's name may be praised and glorified by all His creatures." This should be the first object of our desires and prayers, that God be honoured, praised, blessed and glorified by all His creatures, according to the words of St. Paul (1 *Tim.* i. 17): "*Now to the King of ages,*

immortal, invisible, the only God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen."

Q. The second Petition is, "Thy kingdom come;" and we are to explain what it signifies:

A. By this Petition "we beg that God may reign in our hearts, by His grace, in this life, and that we may reign for ever with Him in the next." **Observe**: God is supreme Ruler or King of heaven and earth, and all things; and our constant wish should be that He would reign over us by His grace in this life, that we may reign with Him in the life to come. How precious a Petition, which asks for such blessings for time and eternity!

Q. We pass on to the third Petition, which says, "Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven."

A. This means that "we beg of God to enable us, by His grace, to do His will in all things on earth, as the Angels and Saints do it in heaven. **Observe**: "*The will of God is our sanctification*," as St. Paul says (1 *Thes.* iv. 3). The Saints and Angels in heaven do not practise a higher sanctity, nor did our Blessed Lord aim at anything higher in His Blessed life here upon earth. As He Himself declared, it was His daily food. (**Quote** *John* iv. 34). **Relate the passage.**

The will of God is of three kinds: first, His will of command, as we have it in His Commandments; secondly, His will of counsel, consisting in things, which, though not commanded, would be pleasing to Him that we would do; thirdly, His will of good pleasure, consisting in the various things that befall us in the course of His Providence; for such is His watchful care of us, that He has the hairs of our head numbered, and one of them does not fall without His knowledge and will. We pray, therefore, that God's will may be done in these several ways, and that we give ourselves to God to do and suffer everything He wills in our regard, with the same readiness, promptitude, and cheerfulness as the Angels in heaven, who are ready to fly from one end of the universe to the other at His merest nod.

Q. We are now come to the second part of the prayer. It concerns ourselves more immediately. It begins with the fourth Petition, which says: "Give us this day our daily bread," which we explain as follows:

A. By this Petition "we beg for all necessaries for our souls and bodies." **Observe**: We are depending on God for all that

we are, and all we possess, whether in soul or body, whether natural or supernatural; our very existence is in His hands. Therefore, we have recourse to Him for all our wants and necessities, which we comprise under the general term of our daily bread, because our Saviour tells us: "*Not in bread alone doth man live, but in every word that proceedeth from the mouth of God.*" (*Matt.* iv. 4). We also say "daily," because we depend upon God from day to day for everything, and because, as our Saviour says, "*Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof*" (*Matt.* vi. 34), that we may not allow ourselves to be solicitous for the future, which is not in our hands, but in the hands of the Most High.

Q. The fifth Petition is, "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them who trespass against us." What does this Petition mean?

A. We answer, that by it "we beg that God would forgive us our offences, as we forgive them who offend us." **Observe:** We stand constantly in need of the mercy of God to forgive us our sins, for, as the Apostle says, "*We all offend in many things.*" (*James* iii. 2).

But, we are reminded that it is useless to sue for forgiveness for ourselves, unless we forgive others their offences against us; therefore, our Saviour insists on the condition, saying: "*If you will forgive men their offences, your heavenly Father will forgive you also your offences. But if you will not forgive men, neither will your heavenly Father forgive you your offences.*" (*Matt.* vi. 14, 15). Therefore, should any one have in his heart any ill-will towards any one, who has injured or offended him, or if he do not forgive from his heart, he is rather provoking a curse than a blessing upon his own head when he says the words, "forgive **us our trespasses.**"

The condition expressed by the word "as" signifies, moreover, "in the same manner," so as to give to our prayer the meaning that, if we be prompt in forgiving others, God would be prompt in forgiving us: whilst, on the contrary, if we be slow and difficult towards our neighbour in pardoning him, our prayer would be, that the Almighty would be slow and difficult in our regard in pardoning us.

Q. To bring out the condition of pardoning others still more completely, we are asked: "Will God forgive us our offences, if we do not forgive our enemies and all those who have offended or injured us?" To which we reply:

A. "No; God will show no mercy to us unless we forgive from our hearts our enemies, and all those who have offended or injured us." This is the doctrine inculcated by the parable in the Gospel (**which relate**, *Matt.* xviii. 23).

Q. The next Petition consists in these words: "Lead us not into temptation:" and we are to ask what they mean:

A. By them we beg, "that God would strengthen us against temptations." **Observe**: The Petition does not ask that God would leave us free from temptation; for, as holy Job tells us, "*The life of man upon earth is a warfare*" (*Job* vii. 1); a warfare in which we are continually tempted by the devil, the world, and our own corrupt nature, and it is by fighting against these temptations, and overcoming them, that we are to earn our crown. But what the Petition asks is, that God will strengthen us in the hour of temptation, and prevent us by His grace from yielding.

Q. The seventh and last Petition says: "But deliver us from evil." And we are to explain what it means:

A. By this Petition "we beg that God would deliver us in body and soul from all evil, particularly that of sin." **Observe**: This is a universal petition, comprising evil of every kind, evil of soul and body, evil past, present, and to come, especially the evil of sin, both as to its guilt and punishment, that we may arrive at the enjoyment of the kingdom of heaven, the great end of our creation.

The Lord's Prayer ends with the word "Amen." This is the seal, as St. Jerome calls it, of the entire Prayer, imparting to it the stamp of its Divine authenticity, whereby our Blessed Lord would declare to all mankind that this Prayer is His, and that He identifies Himself with all its contents. The word signifies "*so be it*," repeating in a summary way the whole Prayer, and offering it up to the Eternal Father with this seal of authenticity upon it, as the Prayer of His only begotten Son, in whom He is well pleased, and to whom He refuses nothing.

Q. So far for the Lord's Prayer. We proceed in order, to explain the "Hail Mary," and we are asked, in the first place: "Who made the Hail Mary?" To which we answer:

A. "The Angel Gabriel and St. Elizabeth made the first part of it, and the Church made the last." **Observe**: The account of it is given in the first chapter of the Gospel according to St. Luke, as follows (**relate the account**). Like the Lord's Prayer,

it is divided into two parts. The first part relates to the Blessed Virgin herself, and the second to us. The word "Hail" is a word of respectful salutation. When the Angel Gabriel saw Mary, he was amazed at her holiness and exalted perfection, a holiness and perfection greater than he had seen in heaven itself under God. Full, therefore, of respect and reverence for this holiest of creatures, he accosted her, saying: "Hail, full of grace." She was full of grace; but how are we to understand this word "full?" A small vessel, small though it be, may be full, as well as a large one, each according to its capacity. It is so that the Blessed Virgin was full of grace, having been endowed with a larger capacity for God's grace than all other creatures besides.

The Angel proceeded, and said, "the Lord is with thee." God is everywhere, but when it is said He is with any one, it is meant that He is present to that person by a special presence. This is what the Angel wished to convey to Mary. The Lord was with her by a most special presence, and she was with the Lord in the same way, by a special effect of His grace. O, what a blessed union! what a happy communication of God with Mary, and Mary with God!

The Angel goes on to add, "Blessed art thou among women;" as much as to say, the eyes of God are open on all the daughters of Adam, from first to last, and he has preferred thee to them all for the highest dignity which He, God though He is, could confer upon a mere creature as a mother. He then went on to unfold to her the decree of the Incarnation. So far the Angel Gabriel's part of the "Hail Mary."

St. Elizabeth takes up the Angel's words, "Blessed art thou among women;" and adds to them the other words, "and blessed is the fruit of thy womb." Already Elizabeth had learned by revelation the mystery of the Incarnation, which she meant to express in these words.

The second part of the prayer relates to ourselves, and we ask the Blessed Virgin to "pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death." We acknowledge ourselves sinners, and as such we have recourse to Mary as the refuge of sinners, begging of her, by her title of "Mother of God," to pray for us "now," that is every day of our lives, but especially at the awful hour of our death. These words are put into our mouth by our holy Mother the Church, and, consequently, the Church prays with us, when we pronounce them.

Q. We are now asked: "Is it lawful to honour the Blessed Virgin?" and we at once reply:

A. "Yes; whereas God Himself has so much honoured her, and the Scripture says, *all generations shall call her blessed.*" (*Luke* i. 48). Observe: God has honoured our Blessed Lady. Why should not we honour her too, and according to her own inspired words, "*all generations shall call me blessed?*" We should, therefore, be frustrating the design of Providence, did we refuse honouring her; and, at the same time, we should be separating ourselves from all nations, that is, from the entire Christian world, past, present, and to come.

Q. We are asked: "What honour do we give our Blessed Lady?" and we reply:

A. "We honour her more than all the other Saints, because she is the Mother of God, but we never give her Divine or Supreme honour, which is due to God alone." Observe: There are three kinds of religious worship, one for God, and we give that to God alone; another for the Angels and Saints; but between God and the Angels and Saints, Mary holds a place of dignity specially her own, and we honour her with a special honour in that high position above all other creatures, as Queen of heaven and earth, and Lady of the universe, yet not giving her the Supreme honour due to God alone.

Q. But it may be asked, and it is asked: "Why do Catholics so often repeat the Hail Mary and Holy Mary?" We answer:

A. "To honour the mystery of the Incarnation, which that prayer expresses, and to show their great respect and devotion to the Mother of God." (A word upon each reason).

Q. Finally, we are asked: "Why do we always say the Hail Mary after the Lord's Prayer?" and the reason is:

A. "In order that by her intercession we may more easily obtain what we ask for in the Lord's Prayer." Observe: Mary's intercession is omnipotent with God, on account of her relations with the Most Holy Trinity, being joint Parent with the Holy Father, with respect to His Eternal Son, being the Mother of that Eternal Son and Spouse of the Holy Ghost.

Anecdote.

We read in the life of St. Ildephonsus, Archbishop of Toledo in Spain, that, as he was on a journey through the country, to visit his friend St. Isidore, Archbishop of Seville, he fell in with a band of

robbers who infested the country he had to pass through. They carried him off to their captain, who resided in a fortress on the summit of an adjoining mountain. It was in the seventh century, when a great part of Spain, like other countries, was in a lawless state. The captain of the band treated Ildephonsus very kindly, and in return Ildephonsus prayed for him. In his prayer he was admonished that there was a plot on foot, within the fortress, for the captain's death, and next morning he told the revelation he had, and asked him to pass his men in review before him, and he would point out the intended assassin. The captain gave orders accordingly, and the men of the fortress passed on, one after another, except a stable boy, who refused to come. The captain had him brought forward, and as soon as the Saint saw him he knew at once by inspiration that he was the man. "Who are you," said he to him, "and what is your business here? I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to answer me." The stable boy, trembling from head to foot, replied: "I am a demon in human form, and my business here is to carry off the captain to hell, but there is a difficulty in the way. He says a "Hail Mary" every day, notwithstanding the life he is leading, and I can execute my orders only the day that he will discontinue saying that prayer. I am watching that day for the last fourteen years, and it has not yet come." Having heard him out, the Saint, in a tone of authority, said: "Wicked spirit, I command you, in the name of the Saviour of mankind, to depart from this fortress, and never more to molest this man, upon whom you had such a design." The demon disappeared, and the captain and his men were so terrified that they threw themselves at the Saint's feet, confessed their wicked lives, and came down with him from the mountain, and whilst one went here and another there, to engage in an honest course of life, the captain and several of his companions accompanied the Saint on his journey, and entered a monastery to do penance for the rest of their lives. Thus it was that the Saint led captive those who had made him their captive, and all owing to the "Hail Mary" the captain was in the habit of reciting every day, in the midst of his robberies and crimes of every sort.

Conclusion.

Repeat the answers consecutively, and end by saying how precious are not these two prayers. The Lord's Prayer is the Prayer of prayers; all other prayers are only saying in other words the petitions contained in the Lord's Prayer. How heavenly to think that, when we are repeating it, our Blessed Lord is Himself praying with us! And as to the Hail Mary, how hopeful to think that, when we are saying it, Mary is, at the same time, laying our wants and necessities before the throne of God. How then can we end the explanation of this chapter better than by repeating together, "Our Father," &c. Recite both prayers.

LESSON XXIV.

ON THE SACRAMENTS IN GENERAL, AND ON BAPTISM.

Q. We are to be engaged this evening with the twenty-fourth chapter of the Catechism. It commences by asking: "By what other means besides prayer can we obtain the grace of God?" We are taught to reply:

A. "By the Sacraments, the most powerful of all means."

Observe: The Sacraments derive their power of conferring grace from the merits of our Saviour's passion and death. We can explain how this is by an example, the example of how a town is sometimes supplied with water. There are for the purpose large reservoirs or ponds, and from these reservoirs or ponds there are channels or pipes to convey the water to the houses of the inhabitants. Just so, the passion and death of our Saviour provide an inexhaustible supply of graces for the faithful, and the Sacraments are, as it were, so many pipes or channels conveying these graces to our souls. They are the most powerful means of grace, first, because the supply is beyond limit; and secondly, because these channels are ever flowing, and with infallible efficacy, unless we be so unhappy as to put an obstruction in the way by our unworthiness.

Q. Having this general idea of a Sacrament, we are asked more particularly about it: "What is a Sacrament?" and we describe it by saying:

A. "A visible, that is, an outward sign or action, instituted by Christ to give grace."

Observe: There are two things in a Sacrament, what is outside, or visible, and what is inside, or invisible. What is outside is a sign denoting what is inside, or the grace the Sacrament confers. For example, what is outside, or the sign, in Baptism is water: but what is inside, or the grace conferred by Baptism and denoted by the water, is the washing away of original sin, and other sins, if there be any other in the souls of those to whom the Sacrament is administered.

Q. The next question asks: "Whence have the Sacraments the power of giving grace?" and the Catechism answers:

A. "From the merits of Christ, which they apply to our souls," in the manner we have just seen in the comparison of how a town is supplied with water.

Q. There are several ceremonies used in the administration of the Sacraments, and we are asked: "Why are so many ceremonies used in the administration of the Sacraments?" And we answer:

A. "To excite devotion and reverence to them, and to signify and explain their effects."

Observe: In the administration of the Sacraments, there are some ceremonies that are essential, and others not so, and the question relates to the latter, and the Catechism mentions the various useful purposes by telling us how they conduce to excite, &c.

Q. We are finally asked: "How many Sacraments are there?" and we reply:

A. "Seven: Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist, Penance, Extreme Unction, Holy Orders, and Matrimony."

Observe: In all, seven in number, neither more nor less, as the Council of Trent requires us to believe.

Q. Going back on the Sacraments to explain them in order, the Catechism asks: "What is Baptism?" and we reply:

A. "A Sacrament which cleanses from original sin, and makes us Christians and children of God, and heirs to the kingdom of heaven."

Observe: We have all sinned in our first parents, in some mysterious manner we cannot comprehend, and we have come into this world, as St. Augustine says, children of wrath and perdition. This sin, which we have thus inherited from our first parents, is called original sin, and Baptism was instituted for its remedy, and it makes us children of God and heirs to the kingdom of heaven. Whenever we speak of original sin, we must always except the ever blessed Virgin, who was conceived without sin, by a special exemption accorded to her alone. But whilst Baptism was thus instituted as a remedy against original sin, we are to inquire:

Q. "Does it also remit the actual sins committed before it?"

A. And we are taught to answer: "Yes, and all the punishment due to them."

Observe: Making the person baptized a child of God and an heir to the kingdom of heaven, Baptism puts him in the happy

position that, were he to die at that moment, heaven is open, and the arms of the Most High are outstretched to receive him.

Q. We are next asked: "Is Baptism necessary to salvation?" and we reply with our Saviour:

A. "Yes; for without it we cannot enter into the kingdom of God."

Observe: There are, however, three kinds of Baptism: first, the Baptism of Water, which is what we are best acquainted with; secondly, the Baptism of Blood, like that of the holy Innocents and the Martyrs; and thirdly, the Baptism of Fire, that is, the fire of Divine love, which takes the place of Baptism, when Baptism cannot be had. It includes a desire of Baptism, and God is good enough to take the wish for the deed.

Q. The Catechism proceeds to ask: "Who are appointed by Christ to give Baptism?" and we are to say in reply:

A. "The pastors of His Church; but in case of necessity any lay man or woman can give it."

Observe: It was to the pastors of the Church that our Divine Lord gave the commission (*Matt.* xxviii. 19): "*Going, therefore, teach ye all nations: baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.*" Baptism is so necessary that our bountiful Redeemer was pleased to empower every one, whether man or woman, whether heretic or infidel, as well as Catholics, to administer it, using, of course, the proper matter and form in doing so.

Q. Then to instruct every one as to how Baptism is to be given, the Catechism asks the question: "How is Baptism given?" and answers:

A. "By pouring water on the head of the person to be baptized, saying, at the same time, "I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

Observe: Three things are essential for the valid administration of the Sacrament, namely, the act to be done, the words to be said, and the act and words must go together. The act is to pour the water on the head. The words are: "I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Every one of these words must be expressed, and expressed at the same time that the water is being poured on the head.

Q. Lastly we are asked: "What do we promise in Baptism?" and we reply:

A. "To renounce the devil, with all his works and pomps." **Observe:** This promise is made by the godfather and godmother, in the name and on behalf of the person receiving the Sacrament. The Priest asks, "Do you renounce Satan?" and they say, "I renounce him." Then he asks: "And all his works?" and they say, "I renounce them." And the Priest adds: "And all his pomps?" and they say, "I renounce them." These are the promises of Baptism, which we ought frequently to renew, in order to maintain with God the terms and conditions on which we were made His children and heirs to the kingdom of heaven.

N.B.—Relate the example of the eunuch (*Acts* viii.), and observe how we should feel indebted to God for our Baptism, seeing how great a blessing it is. And add, respecting St. Louis, King of France, that he esteemed his Baptism so highly, that he annexed the name of the place where he was baptized to his other name, calling himself Louis de Poissy, this being the place where he had the happiness of receiving the Sacrament of Baptism.

CONCLUSION.

Recapitulate the answers, and say how happy are we in being members of the Catholic Church, which preserves the Seven Sacraments, and affords us the unspeakable advantage of drawing true waters of Divine grace, as the prophet would express it, from our Saviour's fountains, that is, from his five wounds: and how happy are we to have been born by a second birth in the Sacrament of Baptism, whereby we are made brothers and co-heirs of our Divine Lord, with right and title to the kingdom of heaven.

LESSON XXV.

ON CONFIRMATION.

Q. Having treated of Baptism, the Catechism proceeds to the Sacrament of Confirmation, and asks the question at once, "What is Confirmation?" to which it replies:

A. "A Sacrament which makes us strong and perfect Christians." **Observe:** We have two births, one, by which we are born of our parents, and the other, by which we are born of

God in Baptism; and, as according to the birth we have from our parents, we grow up, and become strong in life, so, also, according to the birth we have from God, we are to become strong, and grow up to maturity in the spiritual life. This spiritual strength and ripeness of the spiritual life we have from Confirmation.

Q. This Sacrament is administered, unless in rare exceptional cases, by the Bishop, and the Catechism therefore asks: "How does the Bishop give Confirmation?" and describes the manner as follows:

A. "By the imposition of hands and by prayer, that is, he holds out his hands, and prays at the same time, that the Holy Ghost would descend upon those who are to be confirmed, and then makes the sign of the cross on their forehead with chrism." And it explains, that as regards the imposition of hands, the Bishop holds his hands reached out towards those who are to be confirmed, and at the same time he prays that the Holy Ghost, the Third Person of the Blessed Trinity, would descend upon them; and having done this, he makes the sign of the cross on the forehead of each, anointing it with consecrated oil, called chrism, saying certain words in doing so. It was in this manner the Apostles gave Confirmation, as we see in the Acts of the Apostles, to which the Catechism refers.

Q. But besides imposing hands, praying, and anointing the forehead, "the Bishop gives the person he confirms a stroke on the cheek." The Catechism tells the reason:

A. "It is to put him in mind that by Confirmation he is strengthened to suffer, and, if necessary, even to die for Christ." **Observe:** Here we have the grace or effect of Confirmation pointed out. It gives grace to suffer like the confessors of old and even to die like the martyrs, if necessary, for Christ. A faithful soldier will die sooner than desert his colours; so also a Christian fortified by the grace of Confirmation, will die rather than abandon the standard of Jesus Christ.

Q. But in order to receive this Sacrament worthily, we are asked, "Is it necessary to be in the state of grace?" and we say:

A. "Yes;" and we say, moreover, "children of an age to learn should be instructed in the Christian Doctrine." **Observe:** Children should be taught the Christian Doctrine, that is, their Catechism, as soon as possible, and should be thereby prepared for Confirmation; and parents are very much to blame, who

neglect teaching their children, or having them taught, the Catechism, from their tenderest years, and allow them to grow up, and to go into the business of life, without being confirmed.

Q. But, besides being in a state of grace and duly instructed, we are asked, "What special preparations should be made for Confirmation?" and we reply:

A. "To make a good confession, and by fervent prayer to beseech your Heavenly Father to send His Holy Spirit on you." **Observe:** The reason of a good confession is to be sure of being thereby in the state of grace, and we should, moreover, pray to our Heavenly Father to impart to us the grace of the Sacrament, that is, that He would send down His Holy Spirit, or in other words, the Holy Ghost, upon us, because we should ask in order to receive, as our Blessed Saviour so distinctly enjoins.

Q. And we are further asked about a state of grace, "What do you think of those who receive Confirmation in a state of mortal sin?" that is, who are not in a state of grace going to Confirmation. We answer:

A. "That such persons become more sinful by adding to their former guilt the horrid crime of sacrilege." **Observe:** How dreadful to think that any person would dare to approach this holy Sacrament in a state of mortal sin, having before his eyes the terrible truth, that going in that state he would come away loaded with the additional crime of sacrilege for abusing the Sacrament!

Q. We are next asked, "What graces are received by Confirmation?" and the Catechism tells us:

A. "The seven gifts of the Holy Ghost;" and it enumerates them: "Wisdom, understanding, counsel, knowledge, fortitude, piety, and the fear of the Lord."

We receive, first, the gift of wisdom, which points out to us heaven as our true country, and the possession of it as our true and only happiness.

Secondly, we receive the gift of understanding, to know God better, and understand His Divine perfections, as also the mysteries of our holy religion.

Thirdly, we receive the grace of counsel, by which we are enlightened in our doubts and difficulties, whereas otherwise we should not know what to do.

Fourthly, we receive the gift of fortitude, by which we are endowed with courage from on high, to do and suffer whatever

may be required of us in the service of God, even to the shedding of our blood, sooner than betray our religion.

Fifthly, we receive the gift of knowledge, by which we form correct ideas of all things here below, as originally coming from God and tending back again to God, whereby every creature, however small, becomes a mirror to us, in which we see God with His Divine perfections reflected.

In the sixth place, we receive the gift of piety, which, as the Apostle says, is useful for all things, lifting up our minds to our Heavenly Father with the hearts of children, behaving ourselves to our superiors as if they were our parents, and to all mankind as brothers and sisters, with the bowels of charity and mildness.

And, in the last place, we receive the gift of fear, to mingle that sentiment with the love of God, that we may work out our salvation in fear and trembling.

How precious these gifts! How should not we value a Sacrament which conveys them from the merits of Christ to our souls!

Q. We are to consider, however, that whilst Confirmation imparts such precious gifts, it imposes, at the same time, very serious obligations. Therefore, we are asked, "What obligations do we contract by Confirmation?" and we are taught to answer:

A. "To profess our faith openly, not to deny our religion on any occasion whatsoever; and, like good soldiers of Christ, to be faithful to Him unto death." **Observe:** There are occasions for professing our faith openly, when God's honour, our own, or our neighbour's good requires we should do so. Also, we must never, for any consideration, deny our faith in word or act, and we must always behave ourselves as faithful soldiers, under Jesus Christ as our great Captain, against Satan and his associates, whether visible or invisible, in the great warfare of our salvation.

Q. Finally, we are asked, "If it be a great sin to neglect Confirmation?" and we say:

A. "Yes; especially in these evil days, when faith and morals are exposed to so many and such violent temptations." **Observe:** We have only to look around us, we see dangers and temptations on every side. We see people making shipwreck of their morals in every direction; we feel the temptations assailing us night and day. Our faith even is sometimes put in peril. To be prepared for all these dangers and temptations, how much do we

stand in need of a Sacrament instituted to make us strong and perfect Christians, and how inexcusable to neglect so salutary a means of grace.

Conclusion.

Recite the answers consecutively, and **relate** the mystery of the descent of the Holy Ghost on the Disciples, **showing** the wonderful effects produced in them thereby. Say, without stating the mystery to have been a Sacrament, that it illustrates the effect of Confirmation in the souls of the faithful, according as there may be need or obligation for their use, in the strife we have to maintain against the devil, the world, and our own corrupt nature, in our passage through this life here below.

LESSON XXVI.

ON THE BLESSED EUCHARIST.

The twenty-sixth lesson of the Catechism, which is to occupy us this evening, treats of the Blessed Eucharist. How can we speak worthily of this adorable mystery? Let us beg of God to grant us His Divine grace, and guide both our heart and tongue in what we are to say, in explaining the Christian doctrine on a subject, which engages the wonder of the Angels in heaven.

The Catechism begins by asking at once:

Q. "What is the Blessed Eucharist?" and answers:

A. "The body and blood, soul and divinity of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, under the appearances of bread and wine."

Observe: To bring before our minds the signification of these words, let us imagine ourselves at Mass, and that the Priest has arrived at that part of the Mass called the Elevation. We recollect how, in this solemn act, he holds up above his head the Sacred Host, round in form, and white in colour. That is the Blessed Eucharist, under the appearance of bread. And we recollect how, in a moment or two after, he elevates the chalice. What is contained in the chalice is the Blessed Eucharist, under the appearance of wine; but under each appearance, whether of

bread or wine, so presented to our view at the Elevation, Jesus Christ is present in body and blood, with soul and divinity; that is, He is present both God and man; the same as He was born of the Blessed Virgin; the same as He died on the cross; the same as He arose from the dead, and ascended into heaven; the same as He is seated at the right hand of the Father; and the same as He will come to judge the living and the dead. And when we say *present*, we do not mean that He is present in mere type or figure, in mere memorial or representation, but that He is *really, truly*, and *substantially* present, under the appearances of bread and wine.

Let us also imagine we see a person going to Holy Communion. We see the Priest reaching the Holy Communion to him, and placing it on his tongue. It is white and round, like the Host that the Priest raises and presents to the people at the Elevation, but it is smaller in size. Here also, under this form and appearance of bread, we have the Blessed Eucharist, that is, Jesus Christ, really, truly, and substantially given to, and received by, the person communicating.

This is so true and certain, so absolute and real, that the Holy Fathers, to make us understand the mystery, explain it by a comparison. "See," they would say, "a piece of wax put into a vessel of melted wax, it at once combines with it, and becomes one with it. So our Divine Saviour, entering into us by the Holy Communion, becomes united with us, that is, He becomes one with us, and makes us one with Himself." They impress this idea still more by saying, that when we communicate we are made concorporeal and consanguineal with our Divine Saviour, that is, of the same body and the same blood with Him. (**Some words of admiration**).

Q. The next question respecting the Blessed Eucharist, is: "What the word 'Eucharist' means?" and the Catechism gives us the meaning in saying:

A. "A special grace or gift of God; and it also means a solemn act of thanksgiving to God for all His mercies."

Observe: It is indeed a special, and a most special grace or gift, which we could never have deserved, even though we had the purity of angels, or the sanctity of St. John the Baptist; and it is a special grace or gift of God, because it is only God who could bestow it upon us, that is, give Himself to us. It, moreover, signifies a solemn, that is, a public act of thanksgiving to

God for all His mercies. Of ourselves, we are incapable of giving worthy thanks to God for the least of His favours; but, in the Blessed Eucharist, our Divine Saviour puts Himself between us and His Eternal Father, and renders to Him, on our behalf, the thanks we owe Him.

Q. We are next asked: "What do we mean by the appearances of bread and wine?" and we answer:

A. "The taste, colour, and form of bread and wine, which still remain after the bread and wine are changed into the body and blood of Christ."

Observe: To understand this explanation, we must observe, that at Mass the Priest has bread and wine before him on the altar; bread in the form and appearance you see at the Elevation, and wine as you see it poured into the chalice. The bread is real bread, and the wine is real wine, up to the time of Consecration, that is, immediately before the Elevation. At that solemn moment of Consecration, the Priest pronounces first over the bread, and then over the wine, the sacred words appointed by our Divine Saviour Himself; and then, by the all-powerful efficacy of these words, the bread first, and then the wine, are changed into the body and blood with the soul and divinity of our Divine Lord. But, notwithstanding this change, in reality the appearances continue the same as before Consecration; that is, the form, as it is seen, appears the same as before, whilst we are to believe, nevertheless, the substance of the bread and wine to have undergone a real, true, and substantial change, whereby they become, each, the body and blood with the soul and divinity of Jesus Christ. What a mystery! Let us adore it, "*bringing into captivity every understanding unto the obedience of Christ.*" (2 *Cor.* x. 5).

Q. The Catechism goes on to ask: "Are both the body and blood of Christ under the appearance of bread and under the appearance of wine?" and answers:

A. "Yes; Christ is whole and entire, true God and true Man, under the appearance of each."

Observe: This question is very important, because when the Priest pronounces the words of Consecration over the bread, all he says, speaking in the name of Christ, is, "THIS IS MY BODY;" and all he says over the wine is, "THIS IS MY BLOOD;" and it may, therefore, be asked if we believe not only the body of our Redeemer to be present under the appearance of bread

alone, but His blood also, with His soul and divinity; as it may likewise be asked if, under the appearance of wine *alone*, we are to believe His sacred body present together with His soul and divinity? We say:

A. Yes; in both cases, not indeed in virtue of the words of Consecration, but because Christ cannot be separated; and, therefore, *wherever* His body is, *there* likewise must be His blood, and *wherever* one or the other is, *there* likewise must be His blessed soul and adorable divinity. This is what the Catechism teaches in the answer: "Yes; Christ is whole and entire, *true* God and *true* Man, under the appearance of each."

Q. The next question makes an appeal to our faith, and asks: "Are we to believe, that the God of all glory is under the appearance of our corporal food?" and we say most distinctly:

A. "Yes; as we must also believe that the same God of all glory suffered death under the appearance of a criminal on the cross."

Observe: What we receive in the Holy Communion has the appearance of bread, that is, the appearance of the food we give to those bodies of ours; and we are therefore asked, are we to believe that we receive the God of all glory under that humble form?

A. We answer unhesitatingly "Yes;" and we give the reason, namely, that we believe this mystery, just as we must believe "that the same God of all glory suffered death under the appearance of a criminal on the cross."

Observe: We look at the crucifix. It presents to us the appearance of a criminal dying in disgrace upon that disgraceful gibbet. Yet, we believe Him, who dies thereon, to be the God of all glory. After that, what difficulty should we have in believing in the mystery of the Blessed Eucharist, that under the appearance of bread and wine, He, the same God of all glory, is really, truly, and substantially present, body and blood, soul and divinity? One is as easy or as difficult as the other; and, believing the mystery of the Cross, we overcome every difficulty respecting the mystery of the Blessed Eucharist.

Q. But we are asked: "How can the bread and wine become the body and blood of Christ?" and we reply:

A. "By the goodness and power of God, with whom no word shall be impossible." (*Luke* i. 37).

Observe: Where the goodness of God speaks, that goodness

which is infinite, and where His power speaks, that power which is omnipotent, nothing is impossible; everything is easy, and it is to that goodness and power we are indebted for the Blessed Eucharist.

Q. But it may be asked if, in point of fact, our Blessed Lord did actually change bread and wine into His body and blood, and what proof have we of His having done so? Therefore the Catechism asks the question: "Are we assured that Christ changed bread and wine into His body and blood?" and makes answer:

A. "Yes; by the very words which Christ Himself said when He instituted the Blessed Eucharist at His Last Supper."

Q. And, then, we are called upon to state these words, the Catechism asking: "Which are the words He pronounced when He instituted the Blessed Eucharist?" They are:

A. "THIS IS MY BODY; THIS IS MY BLOOD" (*Matt.* xxvi. 26, 28). **Observe**: These words will stand for ever; heaven and earth shall pass away, but these words shall never pass away. Let us imagine ourselves present, looking at our Divine Saviour with the bread in His hands, and saying in presence of His Apostles, "THIS IS MY BODY,' and then with the chalice in His hands, and saying, "THIS IS MY BLOOD." Who would say: No. it is not your body, it is not your blood? Who could pretend that He did not mean what He said. Could He make use of plainer words? And if we have no doubt of His power to do what He says, surely we can have no doubt of His meaning; and, therefore, let us say with St. Peter. "*Lord, Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we have believed and have known, that Thou art the Christ, the Son of God.*" (*John* vi. 69, 70).

Q. But it is not enough to know that our Divine Lord did Himself change bread and wine into His body and blood; we want further to be assured that He gave the power of doing the same to the Priests of His Church for all time to come. Therefore, the Catechism asks the question: "Did Christ give power to the Priests of His Church to change bread and wine into His body and blood?" And answers:

A. "Yes; when He said to His apostles, at His Last Supper, "DO THIS FOR A COMMEMORATION OF ME." (*Luke* xxii. 19). **Observe**: These words deserve all our attention. "DO THIS FOR A COMMEMORATION OF ME." Do this; do what you have seen Me doing; what is that? Changing bread and wine into

My body and blood. As He said so, He meant what He said: and who will doubt His power to do and accomplish what He meant? Therefore, our Blessed Lord not only changed bread and wine Himself into His body and blood; but gave the Priests of His Church the power of continuing the mystery till the end of time. This was a wonderful treasure to leave us, and therefore we are asked:

Q. "Why did Christ give the Priests of His Church so great a power?" and the answer displays the wonderful goodness of our Divine Lord; it is as follows:

A. "That His children, throughout all ages and nations, might have a most acceptable Sacrifice to offer to their heavenly Father, and the most precious food to nourish their souls."

Observe: At His Last Supper Our Divine Lord had all ages and nations before His mind. The length and the breadth, the height and the depth of His love embraced all the members of His Church, lasting, as it was to last, for all times, and extending, as it was to extend, to the end of the world; and His beautiful design was to leave us all a most acceptable Sacrifice to offer to our Heavenly Father, and a most precious food to nourish our souls. **(Words of thanksgiving).**

Observe: That if our Divine Saviour had not Himself instituted the Blessed Eucharist, it never could have come into the mind of man to ask Him for so great a proof of His love. The Lord gave Solomon the extraordinary permission to ask any favour he liked of Him. That wisest of men thought of what he would ask, and he asked only for wisdom; and, notwithstanding his extraordinary wisdom, it never occurred to him to ask so great a favour as that which our Saviour of His own accord grants us in the Divine mystery of the Blessed Eucharist. How great, therefore, should be our gratitude and admiration!

Conclusion.

Repeat consecutively the answers, and end by saying, how can we end better than by repeating the Psalm, which all sing after Benediction of the Most Holy Sacrament? "*O praise the Lord, all ye nations: praise Him, all ye people. For His mercy is confirmed upon us and the truth of the Lord remaineth for ever.*" (*Psalm* cxvi. 1, 2).

LESSON XXVI.—(*continued*).

THE SACRIFICE OF THE MASS.

We continue this evening the twenty-sixth lesson of the Catechism, in order to explain the Sacrifice of the Blessed Eucharist, or the Blessed Eucharist as a Sacrifice. To prepare us for this explanation, the Catechism asks:

Q. What is a Sacrifice?" and replies:

A "That first and most necessary act of religion, whereby we acknowledge God's supreme dominion over us, and our total dependence on Him." **Observe**: The Catechism is not content with saying that Sacrifice is an act of religion, but tells us, it is the "first" and "most necessary" act of religion; because there can be no religion, which does not give to God that honour, which specially and exclusively belongs to His Divine Majesty.

"By Sacrifice," as the Catechism further states, "we acknowledge God's supreme dominion over us, and our total dependence on Him." He brought us out of nothing by creating us; He maintains us in creation by His dominion over us; and we so depend upon Him that it is in Him we live, move, and have our being to such a degree, that if He were to withdraw His all-sustaining hand from us for a moment, that moment we should fall back again into the state of nothingness, from which He drew us in our creation. This we acknowledge by Sacrifice.

There was Sacrifice offered from the beginning of the world. The Old Law had many kinds of Sacrifices; but the New Law has only one, namely, the Sacrifice of the Mass. And we are therefore asked:

Q. "What is the Sacrifice of the Mass?" We answer:

A. "The Sacrifice of the Body and Blood of Christ, which are really present under the appearances of bread and wine, and are offered to God by the Priest for the living and the dead."

Observe: Let us suppose ourselves at Mass. We have the Priest before us at the altar. What is he doing? He is offering Sacrifice. What is he offering in Sacrifice? The Body and Blood of Christ, which are made to be present together with His Soul and Divinity, by the words of consecration; and he makes

this offering for the living and the dead, that is, for the poor suffering souls in purgatory.

Q. Then we are asked: "Is the Mass a different Sacrifice from that of the Cross?" and we say:

A. "No;" and assign the reason, saying: "Because the same Christ, who once offered Himself a bleeding victim to His Heavenly Father on the cross, continues to offer Himself in an unbloody manner by the hands of His Priests on our altars."

Observe: What makes a Sacrifice the same or different is that the victim, or what is offered, be the same, or different. On this account the Sacrifice of the Mass, and that of the Cross, are the same, because the victim is the same, and the Chief Priest is the same, the victim in both cases being the Body and Blood of our Lord, and the Chief Priest being our Saviour Himself, in each instance; for the Priest we see at the altar is only the Minister of our Divine Lord, using His words, and acting according to His order and institution, He Himself, though invisible, being the principal Agent or Priest. The only difference is the manner of offering, the Sacrifice of the Cross having been offered in a *bloody* manner, whilst the Sacrifice of the Mass is offered in an *unbloody* manner on our altars.

Q. We are then asked, if "the Mass was offered in the Old Law?" and we answer:

A. "No; so great a Sacrifice was reserved for the New Law, which was to fulfil the figures of the Old, and give religion its full perfection."

Observe: As we have already noticed, there were several kinds of sacrifices in the Old Law, but these sacrifices had their value only by their reference to the Sacrifice of our Saviour on the Cross. They were, therefore, types or figures of that great Sacrifice, and of course they came to an end, when that great Sacrifice itself took place. But that great Sacrifice was to continue thenceforth to the end of time, and this is done by the Sacrifice of the Mass, which is the same Sacrifice with it, and therefore the great Sacrifice peculiar to the New Law, fulfilling the figures of the Old Law, and giving thereby to the religion of the New Law all its perfection.

Q. We are now asked: "At what part of the Mass are the bread and wine changed into the Body and Blood of Christ?" and we answer, as we have said already:

A. "At the Consecration," that is, immediately before the Elevation.

Q. But then comes the great question: "By whom are the bread and wine changed into the Body and Blood of Christ?" and our faith tells us:

A. "By the Priest, but in virtue of the words of Christ, whose person the Priest represents at the awful moment of Consecration."

Observe: To understand this answer, we must bring before our minds, that in the New Law, that is, the Christian Religion, there is *but one* Priesthood, that of our Divine Lord Himself, who is, therefore, Priest for ever, according to the order of Melchisedech, and that all other Priests are Priests in Him, partaking of His Priesthood; and the Priest whom we see at the Altar is only His agent or delegate in the great function. Hence, when the Priest comes to the Consecration, instead of saying, "*This is the Body of Jesus Christ; this is the Blood of Jesus Christ,*" he says: "This is *My* Body; this is *My* Blood," speaking thus in the person of Jesus Christ, and Jesus Christ recognising these words as His own, imparts to them an all-powerful efficacy, by which the bread and wine are changed into His Body and Blood, with His Soul and Divinity. How wonderful! How heavenly! and therefore does the Imitation of Christ say to Christians: "When you hear Mass it should appear to you as great, as new, and as pleasing, as if, on that very day, Christ, first descending into the Virgin's womb, was made man, or, hanging on the cross, suffered and died for man's salvation." (*I.* iv., ii. 6).

Q. Christ, therefore, the great High Priest, being present on the altar, and offering Himself there as He once offered Himself on the Cross of Calvary, the manner of oblation alone being different, the Catechism asks: "What are the ends or purposes for which Mass is said?" The answer is:

A. "To give God honour and glory; to thank Him for His benefits; to obtain the remission of our sins, and all other graces and blessings, through Jesus Christ.

Observe: We are bound to honour and glorify God, but we cannot do so sufficiently. Therefore our Saviour, in the Sacrifice of the Mass, places Himself between us and His Heavenly Father, to make an offering of Himself on our behalf to His Supreme Majesty, an offering fully adequate to, and commensurate with, that Adorable Majesty.

In the second place, we owe a debt of gratitude to Almighty God for His great and manifold benefits; and as we are inca-

pable of giving Him worthy thanks for the least of these benefits, our Divine Saviour once again places Himself on the altar between us and His Heavenly Father, and offers Himself in Sacrifice, to make a suitable thanksgiving for us, and it is our great consolation to think that that thanksgiving is not only ample, but abundantly ample.

In the third place, what could we do of ourselves for our sins? Were we to die a thousand deaths, we could not make atonement for the least of them. But our merciful Redeemer interposes between us and His Father's justice, and by the offering He makes of Himself at Mass, He presents not only a sufficient, but an abundant, atonement for our transgressions. "*With Him*," says the Psalmist, "*is there copious redemption.*"

Finally, depending on God for all things, we are in constant need of having recourse to His supreme bounty for new favours and graces. Again, our merciful Redeemer takes up our cause, and, offering Himself to His Heavenly Father on the altar, He prays that Father to unlock the treasures of His mercies, and to pour them down upon us.

Thus we have a universal resource in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, for rendering due honour and glory to God, thanking Him for His mercy and goodness, propitiating His justice, and obtaining all manner of benefits from His divine bounty. And we have to recollect, moreover, that this Adorable Sacrifice is not only profitable to us here on earth, but that it sends down relief to purgatory, assuaging the pains, and shortening the detention of poor souls in that place of suffering.

Q. But there remains another end for which Mass is offered; therefore the Catechism asks: "For what other end is Mass offered?" and replies:

A. "To continue and represent the Sacrifice of Christ on the Cross. "*This do,*" says Christ, "*for the commemoration of Me.*" (1 *Cor.* xi. 25).

Observe: To continue the Sacrifice of Christ on the Cross, our Divine Lord might, if He liked, continue the manner in which He did offer Himself on Calvary; but the Mass is the manner He has chosen for doing so, and we are to consider the Mass, therefore, as the continuance of the Sacrifice of the Cross. It also is a representation of it, keeping it always alive in our thoughts and affections, according to His most gracious words: "*This do, for the commemoration of Me.*" (1 *Cor.* xi. 25).

Q. From all this, we can easily see that, when we are at Mass, we ought to feel as if we were on the hill of Calvary, side by side with the Blessed Virgin, looking on the awful scene of our Saviour suffering, and dying as the great Redeemer, Mediator, and Advocate of mankind; and therefore the Catechism asks the question: "How should we assist at Mass?" in order to answer:

A. "With great interior recollection and piety, and with every mark of outward respect and devotion," just as we would assist at our Saviour's crucifixion if we were present on the spot.

Q. Finally, we are to learn "Which is the best manner of hearing Mass?" The Catechism tells us:

A. "To offer it to God with the Priest for the same purpose for which it is said, to meditate on Christ's sufferings, and to go to Communion."

Observe: The people have their share in the offering of the Holy Sacrifice, on which account St. Peter calls all Christians "*a kingly priesthood.*" (1 *Pet.* ii. 9). The congregration should, therefore, accompany the Priest, as he goes along, reading their prayer-books, or thinking on the various stages of the Passion corresponding with the various parts of the Mass, and go to Communion, in order thereby to partake really and truly of the Sacrifice. However, when they cannot go to Communion really, it is by all means desirable to communicate spiritually, according to the forms found in the prayer-book for that purpose.

Although there is no obligation of hearing Mass, except on Sundays and Holidays, still it would be very meritorious to do so on other days; and it is found by people in business, that the practice of doing so does not interfere with their business, but brings a blessing both on it and on themselves. It is related of two men, in the same trade, that one had a large family to support, and went to Mass nevertheless every day, and that his business prospered with him; whilst his neighbour, although as good a man of business, was always struggling with difficulties, though he had only a small family to provide for. Seeing the other doing so well, he asked him one day if he had any secret in the management of his affairs, which secured to him such success, and if he would tell it to him. "O yes," said he, "I have a secret; however, it will be no secret to you. I will call upon you to-morrow morning, and show you my secret." Morning

came, and, true to his word, he called upon his friend and said to him: "Come along with me." The other, of course, obeyed, and found himself in a short time in the church at Mass, after which, his friend bade him "good morning," and told him to go home to his business. He did the same a second and a third time, whereupon, the other said to him: "I don't understand this kind of thing; you were to tell me a secret about business, and instead of doing so, you have asked me to accompany you to Mass. This is no secret to me; I know myself the way to the church, and can go by myself whenever I like." The pious man replied: "I have shown you the whole secret. It is here I find the success I have in business: you know the words of our Saviour, "*Seek first the kingdom of God and His justice, and all things else shall be added unto you.*" These words, seconded by the grace of God, touched the other man's heart, and taking up the example of his pious neighbour, he began to go to Mass every day, and found, in a short time, not only his spiritual interests, but his temporal concerns went on so well, that he got to be quite comfortable, and at his ease in supporting, and providing for, his family. (Rodriguez, "Christian Perfection," vol. ii., chap. 16th).

Conclusion.

Relate the answers consecutively, and say what reason have we to repeat with the Psalmist: "*How lovely are thy tabernacles, O Lord of Hosts! My soul longeth and fainteth for the courts of the Lord. My heart and my flesh have rejoiced in the living God. For the sparrow hath found herself a house, and the turtle a nest for herself where she may lay her young ones: Thy altars, O Lord of Hosts, my king and my God*" (*Psal.* lxxxiii. 2, 5); or with Moses, "*Neither is there any other nation so great, that hath gods so nigh them, as our God is present to all our petitions.*" (*Deut.* iv. 7).

LESSON XXVII.

ON COMMUNION AND PENANCE.

Q. The last chapter we heard explained, ended with mentioning Holy Communion as one of the means of assisting well at the Adorable Sacrifice of the Mass; and the chapter that is to engage us this evening begins by asking: "What do you mean by going to Communion?"

A. To which it answers: "Receiving the Blessed Eucharist."

Q. The subject is followed up by the further question: "Is it advisable to go often to Communion?"

A. To which we reply: "It is;" and we add the reason, saying, "that nothing can conduce more to a holy life;" and we ground this assertion on the very words of our Saviour, who says in distinct terms: "*He that eateth this bread, shall live for ever.*" (*John* vi. 59).

Q. Frequent Communion being, therefore, so salutary to us, the Catechism asks a most important question; it is: "How must we be prepared for Communion?"

A. And it tells us: "We must be in a state of grace, penetrated with a lively faith, animated with a firm hope, and inflamed with an ardent charity."

Observe: Here are four dispositions laid down by way of preparation for a worthy Communion. The first is, to be in a state of grace; and the Catechism accordingly asks: "What means to be in the state of grace?"

A. And it answers by saying: "To be free at least from the guilt of mortal sin." **Observe**: Judas was the first that received the Holy Communion in a state of mortal sin. What a dreadful example to imitate!

Q. The second disposition required for a worthy Communion is to be penetrated with a lively faith; and consequently the Catechism asks: "How are we to be penetrated with a lively faith?" and we are to reply:

A. "By firmly believing that the Blessed Eucharist is Jesus Christ Himself, true God and true man, His very flesh and blood, with His soul and divinity." **Observe**: The voice of faith must speak within us, and relying on the very words of Jesus

Christ, who says, "*This is My Body; this is My Blood*," we are to feel assured that what we receive in going to Communion is really, truly, and substantially the Body and Blood, with the Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ; in other words, that we receive Jesus Christ Himself true God and true man; the same God-man who was born of the Blessed Virgin; the same God-man who died on the Cross of Calvary, who rose from the dead, ascended into heaven, and who will come at the end of the world to judge all mankind. This must be our belief as we approach the Holy Eucharist; and we must be penetrated to the very centre of our souls with this faith, so that our faith be a lively faith, or, as it were, a soul within our soul, animating us by its presence within us.

Q. The third disposition laid down for a worthy Communion is, "to be animated with a firm hope," and we are asked how are we to have this disposition?

A. We answer: "By having great confidence in the goodness of Christ, who gives Himself to us without reserve in this banquet of His love." **Observe**: God's goodness is the foundation of our hope; and where does He show this goodness more wonderfully than in the Holy Communion, in which not satisfied with a lesser gift, He bestows Himself, great God though He is, upon us, taking for that purpose the form of our daily nourishment, and giving Himself to us so unreservedly, that after Communion He is so united with us, that we become one and the same with Him, and He one and the same with us? What confidence should we not, therefore, have as we approach to receive Him? And may we not assure ourselves with absolute certainty, that He, who gives Himself to us, will refuse us nothing that He sees necessary or advantageous for our spiritual welfare?

Q. The fourth disposition for a good and worthy Communion is, to be "inflamed with an ardent charity;" and therefore we are asked: "How are we to be inflamed with an ardent charity?"

A. We reply: "By returning love for love to Christ, and by devoting ourselves in earnest to His service all the days of our lives." **Observe**: Love is not one-sided; it gives and, at the same time, it challenges a return. Therefore, when our Divine Lord comes to us in the Holy Communion, and through love gives Himself, He would say to us: "*Son, give Me thy heart.*" (*Prov.* xxiii. 26). In receiving Him, therefore, we should give

Him all the affections of our souls, and also dedicate to Him all the service of our entire being, as if we were baptised over again, renouncing the devil with all his works and pomps, and giving ourselves anew to our Blessed Lord with our whole hearts, with our whole souls, with our whole mind, and with our whole strength, to observe His Holy Commandments in proof of our love, as He Himself would have it telling us, "*If you love Me, keep My Commandments.*" (*John* xiv. 15.)

Q. After having laid down the four dispositions of being in a state of grace, penetrated with a lively faith, animated with a firm hope, and inflamed with an ardent charity, the Catechism further asks: "Is anything else required before Communion?"

A. And it tells us: "Yes; to be fasting from midnight; and we should appear very modest and humble, and clean in dress, showing in our whole exterior the greatest devotion and reverence to so holy a Sacrament." **Observe:** This answer sets forth what are called the dispositions of body required by way of preparation for Holy Communion. First, we must be fasting from midnight, and this fast is so strict, that we must not have swallowed anything, however small, from outside the mouth, either in the way of eating or drinking, or even of medicine. Secondly, we should appear very modest and humble, as becomes us in approaching not an earthly sovereign, but the King of Kings, and the Lord of Lords. Thirdly, we should be clean in dress, "showing," as the Catechism says, "in our whole exterior, the greatest devotion and reverence to so holy a Sacrament."

Q. Now we have received; and the Catechism proceeds to ask us: "What should we do after Communion?"

A. We answer: "We should spend some time in meditation and prayer, and particularly in acts of thanksgiving." **Observe:** Nothing can be more unbecoming than to go away immediately, or very soon, after Communion. It is just as if some great personage were, through goodness and love for you, to come into your house, and you would turn your back upon him. Such conduct towards the great ones of this world would be intolerable; how much more intolerable would it be towards the God of heaven and earth! And is not this the conduct of those who go away immediately or very soon after Holy Communion? Therefore, the Catechism tells us, "We should spend some time in meditation and prayer, and particularly in acts of thanksgiving." At least we should spend a quarter of an hour with our dear Lord,

asking all the graces we stand in need of, and thanking Him with all the powers of our souls. **Relate** the example of the ten lepers (*Luke* xvii.); and **apply** it to show the obligation of thanksgiving after Communion.

Q. The Catechism, after having told us what we should do both before and after receiving the Holy Communion, proceeds to ask: "Is it a great sin to receive unworthily?"

A. And it tells us in the words of St. Paul: "Yes; "*whosoever shall eat this bread, or drink the chalice of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.*" (1 *Cor.* xi. 27). And he further adds, that "*he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment to himself, not discerning the body of the Lord.*" (*Ibid.* 29). **Observe**: These are fearful words! In the first place, the Apostle denounces the unworthy communicant guilty of the body and blood, not of a fellow-man, nor of a parent, by imbruing his hands in their blood, but of the Body and Blood of the Lord of Majesty, Christ Jesus Himself. How dreadful, &c. And, in the second place, the unworthy communicant eats judgment, that is damnation to himself by the outrage he is guilty of on the very Person of his Supreme Judge, by not discerning, as the Apostle says, the Body of the Lord, the very Lord who is to be his Judge.

Q. Then we are asked for more precise information: "What do you mean by receiving unworthily?"

A. The answer is: "To receive the Blessed Eucharist in the state of mortal sin;" and this is to be understood not of *several* mortal sins: *one* mortal sin of thought, word or deed, *even one*, would be sufficient for an unworthy Communion.

Q. To be free from mortal sin being so indispensably necessary, we are asked: "What should a person do, if he be in mortal sin before Communion?"

A. We reply: "He must obtain pardon in the Sacrament of Penance." **Observe**: This is his remedy and resource, and no matter however contrite he may feel, he must have recourse to the Sacrament of Penance before venturing to approach.

Q. Naturally, therefore, does the Catechism lead us on to the Sacrament of Penance, and ask us "What is Penance?"

A. To which we answer: "It is a sacrament, by which the sins are forgiven which are committed after Baptism." **Observe**: The answer makes a distinction between the sins committed after Baptism, and sins committed before Baptism, as in the case

of a person who had grown up, and come to the use of reason, without having been yet baptised. The Sacrament of Penance has to do only with sins committed *after Baptism*, and leaves the sins committed *previously* to Baptism itself to be remitted by that Sacrament, together with original sin.

Q. The remission of sin being a work of such magnitude, the Catechism very naturally asks: "By whose power are sins forgiven?"

A. And answers: "By the power of God, which Christ left to the Pastors of His Church." **Observe**: This answer of the Catechism points to a distinction we are to make between the *power* of remitting sin, and the *communication* of that power, and tells us, that the power itself is the power of God, but that our Divine Lord, being God as well as man, *communicated* that power to the Pastors of His Church.

Q. To assure the faithful that our Divine Lord left this great power to the Pastors of His Church, the Catechism asks: "When did Christ leave to the Pastors of His Church the power of forgiving sins?"

A. And answers: "Chiefly when He said to His Apostles: *Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them, and whose sins you shall retain they are retained.*" (*John* xx. 22, 23).

Observe: Words cannot be clearer. They amount to this: if any sinner come to you for the forgiveness of his sins, see whether he be in a proper state to forgive him, and forgive him accordingly; but if he be not properly disposed, leave him, as you find him, under the guilt of his sins; and what you do either in forgiving, or retaining, his sins, will be confirmed that moment in the court of Heaven. Have no doubt on the subject, because I give you the Holy Ghost for the exercise of this power, and it is He that will act in you, and through you, in thus dealing with the sins of mankind.

And we are to observe that our Divine Lord puts no limit either to the *enormity* or *number* of the sins to be remitted, but speaking without exception or reserve, He gives the sinner to understand that if his sins were as red as scarlet, and multiplied beyond the hairs of his head, there is grace and mercy for him in the Sacrament of Penance, if only he come to that Holy Sacrament with the proper dispositions.

Q. Then the Sacrament of Penance having been instituted

for the remision of sin, the Catechism asks: "What must we do to obtain pardon of our sins in the Sacrament of Penance?"

A. And answers: "We must make a good confession." **Observe**: The power of the Sacrament of Penance is not only for *remitting*, but also for *retaining* sins. Consequently, means must be afforded to see whether the sinner is to be pardoned, or left under the guilt of his sins, but this can be seen only by the sinner laying open the state of his soul to the person whom he approaches for the benefit of the Sacrament, and this opening of the state of his soul is what we call *Confession*, of which we are to treat in the next lesson.

Conclusion.

Recapitulate answers in consecutive order, and finish with some sentiments of piety in accordance with the matter of the chapter.

LESSON XXVIII.

ON CONFESSION AND INDULGENCES.

Q. The last chapter of the Catechism, which we have considered, ended by telling us, that to obtain pardon of our sins in the Sacrament of Penance, we must make a good confession; and, pursuing the same subject, the chapter which we are going to explain to-day, opens by asking: "What is the best method to prepare for a good confession?" to which it replies:

A. "First, earnestly to beg of God the grace to make a good confession. Secondly, to examine ourselves carefully on the Commandments of God and of His Church, on the Seven Deadly Sins, and particularly on our predominant passion, and the duties of our station in life, that we may know in what, and how often, we have sinned in thought, word, deed, or omission. Thirdly, to make acts of faith, hope, and charity. And fourthly, to excite ourselves to a sincere contrition for our sins." **Observe**: In this answer we have four distinct duties pointed out to us as a preparation for a good confession.

In the first place, we are "earnestly to beg," &c. The necessity of this duty in preparing for confession is manifest from

what our Divine Saviour tells us : "*that without Him we can do nothing.*" We can stray away from Him, and go far in the paths of sin *by ourselves*, but to return, even to make one step onward in the way of our return to God, this we cannot do without His help and grace. Therefore, in preparing for confession, we are to ask Him with all earnestness to afford us His help and grace.

In the second place, we are to examine ourselves, and find out what are the sins we have to confess. It would be exceedingly wrong to go to confession without this preparation, depending upon what would come to our minds there and then for our confession. The Holy Ghost admonishes us to prepare our souls before *our ordinary prayers*, and not to be like to a man that tempteth God. It would, therefore, be tempting God, that is, putting it upon God to do for us what He orders us to do for ourselves, and by ourselves, in correspondence with His grace, should we ever thrust ourselves into the tribunal of penance, without examining our conscience beforehand, and finding out the sins we have to confess. To examine our conscience for this purpose, we are carefully to review the Commandments of God, the Precepts of the Church, the Seven Deadly Sins, and the duties of our station in life, in order that in this review we may see in what and how often, we have sinned in every different kind of guilt, by thought, word, deed, or omission. In this review, particular attention is to be paid to our predominant passion, that is, to that particular vice which tempts us most, in order to point it out in a special manner to the confessor. To aid us in this examination, our prayer-books have what are called "Tables of sins;" and people, who have long confessions to make, would derive great assistance by studying these tables, pausing as they go along, and trying to remember with regard to each sin, if they were guilty of it, and how often.

In the third place, we are to make acts of faith, hope, and charity before going to confession. These acts are found mixed up with the prayers before confession, as we read them in the prayer-books, and they are practically comprised in the dispositions we have in approaching the Sacrament of Penance. We make acts of faith in believing in the virtue and efficacy of the Sacrament for the remission of sin. We make acts of hope in the confidence we have, that our own sins will be remitted, and we make acts of charity by turning to God in seeking to make peace with Him, and to be admitted once more into His friendship.

In the last place, we are to excite ourselves to contrition sincere and heartfelt contrition, so as to realize within our inmost soul all that is expressed in the words of the Act of Contrition.

Q. Contrition being a necessary part of the Sacrament of Penance, the Catechism asks: "What is contrition?" and says:

A. "A hearty sorrow and detestation of sin, for having offended God, with a firm resolution of sinning no more." **Observe**: Contrition looks two ways, backwards and forwards. In looking backwards, it is a hearty sorrow and detestation of sin, that is, it makes us sorry, and sorry to the heart, before God, for having offended Him by sin; and it makes us turn away from sin with a heartfelt hatred or detestation of it, as being an offence against His Supreme Majesty. And, as it looks forward, contrition produces within us a resolution, a firm resolution, of sinning no more, with the help of God's grace.

Q. But it is important to know, "How we may excite ourselves to this contrition?" and therefore the Catechism tells us:

A. "By the following motives or considerations; the fear of hell, the loss of heaven, our ingratitude in offending God, who is so good to us, and the injury our sins do to God, who is infinitely good in Himself." **Observe**: Here are four motives or considerations presented to us, in order that by thinking on them we may, with God's grace, excite ourselves to contrition for our sins.

The first is the fear of hell. Dwelling on this motive, we bring before our minds the dreadful cavern of hell, the fire in which poor sinners are tormented, and shall be tormented for ever and ever; we think we deserve these torments on account of our sins, and we say to ourselves: how should we not be sorry for committing so dreadful an evil, how should we not detest it, and suffer any calamity sooner than commit it again!

The second motive is the fear of losing heaven. Dwelling on this motive, we say to ourselves: what folly and madness it was to deprive ourselves of all right and title to the happiness of heaven, that happiness, which neither eye hath seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive: and this for the passing filthy pleasure of sin, or for some seeming advantage, which the devil presented to us in tempting us to sin, whereas our dear Saviour says to us: "*What doth it profit*

a man, if he gain the whole world, and suffer the loss of his own soul?" (*Matt.* xvi. 26).

In the third place, we think of how ungrateful we have been to God in offending Him, our best Benefactor, who is to us more than father or mother, our Creator and Sovereign Lord, to whom we are indebted for our very existence, not only in being created by Him, but in being maintained in existence by Him every moment, so that it is in Him we live, move, and have our very being, who so loved us as to give up His own Divine Son, to lay down His life and spill His own blood for our redemption. Oh! if we have minds to think and hearts to feel, we must feel the bitterest anguish spring up within us at the very thought of having offended such a Benefactor.

In the fourth place we excite ourselves to contrition by thinking, that in committing sin we offend a God of infinite goodness and perfection, a God who, instead of being offended, deserves to be loved by all creatures, as being sovereignly amiable, sovereignly perfect in Himself. Oh! if we feel indignant, when we see a person offend a good, worthy and amiable man here on earth, a man liked and loved by every one on account of his excellent qualities, how should we not turn on ourselves with indignation and sorrow at the thought of having raised our hand against a God of infinite perfection, the God of heaven and earth. O, how truly does the Prophet cry out: "*It is an evil and a bitter thing for thee, to have left the Lord thy God.*" (*Jer.* ii. 19).

Q. Besides these four motives, we are asked: "If we would recommend any other motive to excite sorrow for our sins?" and we are taught to answer:

A. "Yes; to consider that the Son of God died for our sins, and that we crucify Him again by sin as often as we offend Him." Observe: O yes, this is a most affecting motive. To make use of it, we have only to imagine ourselves on the hill of Calvary, looking at our Lord and Saviour hanging on the cross for our sins, looking at these hands and feet nailed to an ignominious gibbet, that head crowned with thorns, that entire body torn with whips and scourges, so that, as the Prophet says: "*From the sole of the foot unto the top of the head, there is no soundness*" (*Isai.* i. 6)—not a spot without a wound, from foot to head one continuous wound, and all this for our sins. Oh! a heart should be a heart of stone, that would not melt at such a

spectacle; and this is the work of sin! O yes, every one of these wounds is a mouth crying out and saying: "Ah, sinner, see what you have done! will you go on in your sins, crucifying, in a manner, over again, your adorable Saviour, as often as you offend Him?"

Q. Then, looking back on these motives, we are asked: "Which of them is the best to excite contrition?" and we reply:

A. "To be sorry for our sins, because they are offensive to God, who is so infinitely good and perfect in Himself."

Observe: All the motives we have spoken of are good, and very good, but there is one better than the rest, the motive arising from the consideration of God as infinitely good and perfect in Himself. The reason why this motive is the most perfect is, because it regards God alone, and has nothing selfish with regard to ourselves. We can, for more fully understanding the matter, suppose three sons asking pardon of their father for having offended him. One is sorry, because he fears his father will punish him; the second is sorry, because he fears the father will be less a father, less kind to him; but the third does not consider himself at all, but he has all his thoughts on his parent, and grieves for having offended him, because he deserves to be esteemed and loved, on the ground and title of being his parent. It is manifest that the motive of sorrow the third son has is more perfect and pleasing to the father than that of the first or second. So, likewise, is the motive of being sorry for sin, because it is an offence against God considered in Himself, and according to His infinite goodness and perfections, more perfect than any other. However, they are all good, and every one would do well to use the motive which affects him most, and stirs up contrition most powerfully within him.

Conclusion.

The next question is: "What must we do at confession?" But we have not time to go farther for the present. We will then take a cursory view back upon what we have explained. Recapitulate answers consecutively, and end with some words expressive of sentiments in accordance with the matter explained.

Anecdote.

It is related of a holy Bishop of Amiens in France, that when preparing for confession, he made three stations in his mind, in order

to excite himself to contrition. The first was in hell, the second in heaven, and the third on Calvary. Going down in thought into hell, he looked around, and saw the torments of the damned, and considered they were to last for ever. He then viewed the devils and damned souls as if he saw them with his eyes writhing in their torments; and he listened to their yells and groans of agony and despair, and then he said to himself, this is what sin leads to unless we repent, and be sorry for it. He accordingly made acts of contrition, with the thought of hell before his mind. His second station was in heaven, where he ascended in spirit, and viewed the glory and happiness God has prepared for the blessed; and, after dwelling upon the delights they enjoy, and will for ever enjoy, he said to himself, what madness it is for man to deprive himself of this happiness and glory for the false joys, the fleeting pleasures, the vain honours, and the perishable riches of this life. In the third place, he went up in spirit to Calvary, and there looked on our Saviour hanging on the cross. He viewed Him from head to foot, His head crowned with thorns, His hands and feet nailed to that ignominious gibbet, His side opened with a spear, and His whole body torn and mangled by His scourging at the pillar, and He considered that this was the work of sin, that it was sin more than the Jews that had nailed that dear Saviour to that ignominious cross, and bowing down in presence of his crucifix, he poured out his tears for the part he had by his sins in crucifying his Lord, his Master, and his God. O, if we were to excite ourselves in this way to contrition, how much better would we not come to the holy tribunal!

LESSON XXVIII.—(*continued*).

ON CONFESSION AND INDULGENCES.

Q. We are to resume to-day the explanation of the twenty-eighth lesson of the Catechism, and we commence with the question: "What must we do at confession?" to which we answer:

A. "We must beg the Priest's blessing, say the Confiteor, accuse ourselves of our sins, listen attentively to his instructions, and renew our sorrow when he gives absolution."

Observe: Here are several things pointed out to be done at confession.

First of all, we beg the Priest's blessing, saying to him: "Father, bless me, for I have sinned."

In the second place, we recite the Confiteor, saying: "I confess to Almighty God," and stopping after having said "through my most grievous fault."

Thirdly, we proceed with our confession, beginning by telling the Priest when we were at confession last, if we received absolution then, and if we performed the penance enjoined on us in that confession. We then mention our sins according as we prepared to do so in our previous examination of conscience.

When we have mentioned all we recollect, we listen, in the fourth place, to the instructions the Priest gives; and lastly, we excite ourselves anew to contrition, saying, with all the fervour of our souls, an act of contrition, whilst he pronounces over us the sentence of absolution on the part of God.

Q. The penitent has now come away from confession, but through a false shame or groundless fear, and yielding to the temptations of the enemy of his salvation, he may have concealed a mortal sin in his confession, and accordingly the Catechism asks: "What do you think of those who conceal a mortal sin in confession?" and gives the following answer:

A. "They commit a most grievous sin by telling a lie to the Holy Ghost; and instead of obtaining pardon, they incur much more the wrath of God."

Observe: A person, who would allow himself to yield to the temptation of concealing a mortal sin in confession, would not only be guilty of sin, but a most grievous sin, and his sin would consist in this, that by his concealment he would be guilty of telling a lie to the Holy Ghost, the third Person of the Most Holy Trinity, because the Priest in the holy tribunal of Penance is there not as a mere man, but as agent of the Holy Ghost, according to the words of our Saviour in the institution of the Sacrament, "*Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them; and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained,*" and he would go away guilty of the sin of sacrilege in addition to the other sins he brought with him to the holy tribunal.

Relate the fact of Ananias and Saphira (*Acts* v.), and **apply** it, so as to show how the penitent, who conceals a mortal sin in confession, is guilty, like them, of telling a lie to the Holy Ghost.

To prevent scrupulosity, however, it is to be borne in mind, that there is question only of mortal, and not of venial sin, which latter we are free to tell, or not, in confession.

Q. The next question points out three descriptions of persons, who may have the misfortune of making bad confessions, some by not carefully examining their conscience before coming to confession, others who had not sincere sorrow for their sins, and others, in fine, who concealed a mortal sin in confession; and the answer requires that:

A. "They must truly repent of all such bad and sacrilegious confessions and make them all over again."

Observe: There is no other remedy under heaven. All such confessions must be made over again.

ANECDOTE.

A reason which keeps many people away from confession, and causes people to make bad confessions, is a false shame. This false shame comes directly from the devil. It is related of two Priests, who were hearing confessions opposite each other in the same church, that one of the confessors saw the devil at the other side whispering to a penitent who was preparing for confession. He got up and went over and asked the evil spirit what brought him there, and what he was about. The evil one, forced by the power of God in the holy place he was in, said, "I have come to make restitution to this penitent of something I took away from her." "Restitution," says the Priest, "come, explain yourself." "Yes, restitution," resumed the evil spirit, "I took away shame from her to make her commit the sins she is guilty of, and now I wish to give her back her shame that she may be ashamed to confess them."

Q. It is of the highest importance to be able to know that we had sincere sorrow in confession for our sins; therefore the Catechism asks: "What is the surest sign that our confessions were good, and that we had sincere sorrow for our sins?" and replies:

A. "The amendment of our lives." **Observe:** This is the real test, and a person falling back into his accustomed sins, is compared in Scripture to a dog returning to his vomit, or to the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire. (2 *Peter* ii. 22).

Q. After confession certain duties are to be complied with, on which account we are asked, "What should we do after confession?" and we are taught to answer:

A. "We should return God thanks, and diligently perform the penance enjoined by the confessor." **Observe:** We should return God thanks, in the first place, for having pardoned us our sins. He could have damned us, if He wished. We deserved it,

and His justice called aloud for our damnation, but listening more to His mercy, He has forgiven us. How can we sufficiently thank Him? In the second place, we are to perform whatever penance the confessor has enjoined upon us.

Q. The Catechism therefore asks: "What do you mean by the penance enjoined by the confessor?" We answer:

A. To say some prayers, to observe some fastings, to give some alms, or do some other good work, or works. Whatever it may be, we should faithfully perform it. It constitutes the third part of the Sacrament of Penance, the part called satisfaction, the other parts being contrition and confession.

Q. A very important question now follows: "Will the penance enjoined in confession always satisfy for our sins?" to which we must reply:

A. "No; but whatever else is wanting may be supplied by indulgences, and by our own penitential endeavours." **Observe:** Our sins are forgiven in confession as to their guilt and the eternal punishment due to them, but generally there remains some temporal punishment yet due to God's justice. This debt we may pay in part by performing our penance, but for the full discharge of it we must have recourse to indulgences, and practise of ourselves works of penance, especially by bearing in a spirit of penance all the afflictions we meet with in life.

Q. Indulgences being, therefore, so important, we are asked: "What does the Church teach concerning indulgences?" and we reply:

A. "That Christ gave power to the Church to grant indulgences, and that they are most useful to Christian people." **Observe:** This answer is the teaching of the Holy Council of Trent. In the first place the Council tells us that our Divine Lord left to His Church the power of granting indulgences, and in the second place, it tells us that such indulgences are most useful to Christian people.

Q. The Catechism proceeds to inquire in what respect are indulgences useful, by asking, "What is the use of an indulgence?" We reply:

A. "It releases from canonical penances enjoined by the Church on penitents for certain sins." This answer is also the teaching of the Holy Council of Trent. In the early ages of the Church there were penances enjoined to be performed in public. They were called canonical penances, and were sometimes very severe,

and very long. In modern times, indulgences take the place of these public penances, releasing the penitent from undergoing them.

Q. But this is not all, for the Catechism further inquires: "Has an indulgence any other effect?" and replies:

A. "It also remits the temporary punishments, with which God often visits our sins, and which must be suffered in this life or in the next unless cancelled by indulgences or other good works." This answer we have already in part anticipated, but we are here told, moreover, that the temporary punishment generally due to sin after confession must be suffered either in this life or in the next, *i.e.*, purgatory, unless it be cancelled, *i.e.* discharged, by indulgences, or acts of penance, or other good works.

Q. We have already stated that Christ our Lord left to His Church the power of granting indulgences, but to show this we are asked: "Has the Church power to grant such indulgences?" and we are to say:

A. "Yes; *Whatsoever*, says Christ to St. Peter, *thou shalt loose on earth it shall be loosed also in heaven.*" (*Matt.* xvi. 19). **Observe:** Our Saviour does not say whatsoever *sin*, but in an universal sense, and without restriction, He says, "*whatsoever*," meaning thereby that whatever bond there may be upon the soul of a Christian, that would keep him out of heaven, whether the bond of sin itself, or of temporary punishment due on account of sin, that bond is in the power of the Church to loose it here on earth; and this being the direct effect of indulgences, it follows that the Church has the power from her Divine Spouse to grant them.

Q. But it is not to every one the Church grants indulgences; hence the Catechism asks: "To whom does the Church grant indulgences?" and we are to reply:

A. "To such only as are in the state of grace, and are sincerely desirous to amend their lives, and to satisfy God's justice by penitential works." This answer requires no explanation. It is most distinct in stating that a person must be, in the first place, in a state of grace; and, secondly, that he must be sincerely resolved on amending his life, and satisfying the justice of God for his sins by works of penance, in order to gain indulgences.

Q. But we have to meet a calumny on the subject of indulgences, a calumny which would assert that an indulgence is a

pardon in advance, or a permission to commit sin; and the Catechism asks therefore if this be the case, by proposing the question: "Is an indulgence a pardon for sins to come, or a licence to commit sin?" and repudiating the calumny it says:

A. "No; nor can it remit past sins, for sin must be remitted by penance, as to the guilt of it, and as to the eternal punishment due to mortal sin, before an indulgence can be gained." An indulgence has nothing to do with the remission of sin, either before or after its commission. There must be no mortal sin, where an indulgence takes its effect.

Q. The Church has good and sufficient motives for everything she does, and, therefore, it is interesting to know her motives for granting indulgences; hence we ask: "Why does the Church grant indulgences?" and we answer:

A. "To assist our weakness, and to supply our insufficiencies in satisfying the Divine Justice for our transgressions." **Observe:** The Church is a tender mother to all her children, and, having compassion on our weakness and insufficiency adequately to satisfy God's justice, she aids us to do so by indulgences.

Q. But when the Church grants indulgences to the faithful, she must offer something to God's justice on our behalf for the satisfaction we owe, and which we are of ourselves unable to pay; we are therefore asked: "When the Church grants indulgences, what does she offer to God to supply our weakness and insufficiency, and in satisfaction for our sins?" We answer:

A. "The merits of Christ, which are infinite and superabundant, together with the virtues and good works of His Virgin Mother, and of all the saints." **Observe:** Our Divine Saviour died and suffered more, infinitely more, than was necessary for our redemption, and thereby acquired an infinite treasure of merits, over and above meriting our redemption. Also the Blessed Virgin and many of the saints merited more than their own salvation, and these superabundant merits are united with those of our Divine Lord, constituting with them what is called the Treasury of the Church, from which are taken the indulgences.

Q. But indulgences require some conditions on our part to gain them; therefore, we are asked: "What conditions are generally necessary to gain indulgences?" and we are taught to reply:

A. "A good Confession and Communion, and a faithful compliance with other good works, which the Church requires on such occasions." These are the ordinary conditions; however, the conditions are various for different indulgences, and whatever

they are, they must be faithfully performed, otherwise the indulgence is lost.

Q. For further explanation we are asked: "What are the other good works which the Church usually prescribes, in order to gain indulgences?" and we are taught to answer:

A. "Prayer, fasting, and alms-deeds, which good works, besides Confession and Communion, indulgences promote; and on this account also they are most useful to Christian people." **Observe:** These are the works generally prescribed as conditions for gaining indulgences, and inasmuch as indulgences promote such works, the Council of Trent, on this account alone, even if indulgences conferred no further benefit, is warranted in saying they are most useful to Christian people.

Conclusion.

Sum up answers consecutively, and finish with some expressions of sentiment resulting from subject.

LESSON XXIX.

EXTREME UNCTION, HOLY ORDERS, AND MATRIMONY.

Q. The chapter of the Catechism we have to explain this evening treats of the three Sacraments, Extreme Unction, Holy Orders, and Matrimony, and opens with the question, "What is Extreme Unction?" to which we answer:

A. "A Sacrament which gives grace to die well; and is instituted chiefly for the spiritual strength and comfort of dying persons." **Observe:** The moment of death is, above all other moments, the moment on which eternity depends—only one step onwards, and we are in eternity. Our Blessed Saviour, therefore, desirous of our salvation, graciously instituted the Sacrament of Extreme Unction to aid us in this all-important step, that we may pass out of this life into the joy of the Lord, and be happy with Him for all eternity. It is instituted chiefly, as the Catechism tells us, for the spiritual strength and comfort of dying persons, and when it says chiefly for this purpose, it gives us to understand there is a secondary purpose also, namely, the health of the body, which this Sacrament has the power of

restoring, if such an effect be good for our souls, which is the great and primary object of Extreme Unction.

Q. Extreme Unction is not, however, given to all persons in danger of death, consequently the Catechism asks the question: "Is Extreme Unction given to all persons in danger of death?" and says in reply:

A. "No; only to such as are in danger of death by sickness." **Observe:** A person may be in danger of death in various ways; for example, in a storm at sea, in going to the field of battle, &c. The Sacrament is not for persons in such dangers; the danger must be from sickness in order to warrant its administration.

Q. Extreme Unction requires due preparation beforehand, and therefore we are asked: "How should we prepare ourselves for Extreme Unction?" we answer:

A. "By a good confession, and we should be truly sorry for our sins, and resigned to the will of God when we are receiving that last Sacrament." **Observe:** We are, in the first place, to prepare ourselves for Extreme Unction by confession, and a good confession that would leave nothing on our minds, going, as we are, to appear before the judgment-seat of Christ. We should be sincerely sorry for our sins, not only when making this preparatory confession, but also, whilst we are being anointed, and we are to leave ourselves in the hands of God to live or die according to His adorable will in our regard.

Q We are next asked: "Who are appointed to administer the Sacrament of Extreme Unction?" and we make answer:

A. "The Priests of the Church, as St. James teaches us, and as the Church has constantly practised." This is what St. James the Apostle teaches, saying: "*Is any man sick among you? Let him bring in the priests of the Church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord.*" (*James* v. 14). This teaching of the Apostle has been the practice of the Church at all times.

It is, however, of the greatest importance that the Priest be sent for in proper time, as soon as the illness begins to take a serious appearance, in order that the sick person may be able to make his confession well, and have the dispositions required for the more fruitful reception of the Sacrament of Extreme Unction, and the Holy Viaticum, which is generally administered immediately beforehand, and it is highly culpable to delay sending for the Priest until the sick person is just dying, or so far gone in his illness as not to have the use of his mental faculties.

With regard to the second effect of the Sacrament of Extreme Unction, that is, its effect of restoring the sick person to health, it is to be noticed, that this effect is not to be expected by way of miracle, but only as a help to the powers of nature, and consequently cannot be expected at all, when the sick person is allowed to go on in his illness till it would require a miracle to cure him. Hence the Priest should be sent for in time to give the patient the benefit of the Sacrament for this secondary effect, as regards the health of his body, so far as it may be for the good of his soul at the same time. **Relate** here the example of St. Malachy towards the end of his life, 3rd of November, Butler's "Lives of the Saints," to show how necessary it is to send for the Priest in time.

Q. We are taken on now to the next Sacrament, Holy Orders, and asked: "What is Holy Orders?" We reply:

A. "A Sacrament which gives Bishops, Priests, and inferior clergy to the Church, and enables them to perform their several duties in it." **Observe**: Our Divine Lord, in instituting His Church, appointed several offices, to which those, whom He calls, are to be promoted by the Sacrament of Holy Orders, such as Bishops, Priests, and inferior clergy, and the Sacrament confers the grace they require for the due performance of their various duties, "*as the ministers of Christ, and the dispensers of the mysteries of God.*" (1. *Cor.* iv. 1).

Q. We now come to the last of the Sacraments, the Sacrament of Matrimony, and being asked, "What is Matrimony?" we are taught to answer:

A. "A Sacrament which gives grace to the husband and wife to live happy together, and bring up their children in the fear and love of God."

Observe: Our Blessed Saviour, considering the life-long duties, responsibilities, and difficulties of married life, was mercifully pleased to make the entrance into that state of life through a special Sacrament. From the beginning of the world marriage was a sacred ceremony, but Our Divine Lord raised it to the dignity of a Sacrament of the New Law, to confer grace upon those, who enter upon married life, to live happily together, and to bring up the issue of their marriage, as the Catechism tells us, in the fear and love of God.

Q. The Sacrament of Matrimony, to receive it worthily, requires suitable dispositions, and therefore we are asked: "Do

they receive the grace of the Sacrament of Matrimony, who contract marriage in the state of mortal sin?" to which we answer:

A. "No; they are guilty of a very great sacrilege by profaning so great a Sacrament, and instead of a blessing they receive their condemnation."

Observe: We are to make a distinction between the graces of a Sacrament, and a Sacrament itself, and according to this distinction we are taught that those who get married in a state of mortal sin, receive the Sacrament indeed, and are really married, but they do not receive the grace of the Sacrament; on the contrary, they are guilty of sacrilege, and of a very grievous sacrilege, by receiving unworthily so great a Sacrament; for St. Paul calls it "a great Sacrament;" and instead of a blessing they receive the curse of God upon their union.

Q. To avoid such a misfortune, we are asked: "What should persons do to receive worthily the Sacrament of Marriage?" and we reply:

A. "They should make a good confession, and earnestly beseech God to grant them a pure intention, and to direct them in the choice they are to make."

Observe: Matrimony is a Sacrament of the living, as it is called, and therefore requires to be approached in a state of grace. Accordingly, persons going to get married should prepare themselves by going to confession beforehand, to make themselves sure of being in the state of grace. They should also pray fervently, asking of God the greatest purity of intention in the step they are going to take. They should, moreover, pray that He would direct their choice in a concern of such importance for this life and the life to come. Who is there that does not know, that the happiness of the married couple in this world depends upon the suitability of their character for each other? and as for the life to come, nothing is more certain than that there is many a man, and many a woman in hell, who would be in heaven, had they different companions in married life.

Q. And this choice being so important, it is asked: "Should children consult their parents on their intended marriages?" and the reply is:

A. "Yes; and be advised by them according to reason and religion; they should also give timely notice to their pastors."

Observe: There is nothing more reasonable, or more in keeping with their religious obligations towards their parents than to

take their advice, and be led by them in an affair involving their future here and hereafter. And if the parents be dead, it would be only prudent to consult sensible friends, because no one is sufficient for himself in a matrimonial negotiation, and the wisest men in other respects, and the most cautious females, have made, and every day make, deplorable mistakes by not taking advice, and by keeping everything in their own hands respecting their intended marriages. It is also incumbent on persons about getting married to give timely notice to their respective Parish Priests, that all the formalities required by ecclesiastical discipline may be duly complied with.

Q. The next question is grounded on experience, and asks: "What is the reason so many marriages prove unhappy?" The answer is:

A. "Because many enter into that holy state from unworthy motives, and with guilty consciences, therefore their marriages are not blessed by God."

Observe: We hear complaints on all sides of husbands and wives disagreeing, and leading unhappy lives, unhappy as regards themselves and as regards their children. The Catechism tells us the reason, and experience confirms it, that many enter married life with motives the reverse of what they should be, and in a state of sin. Nay, it only too often happens that habits of sin have been the prelude to their marriage. What blessing can such unions have from God? Rather they have His malediction from the very outset.

Q. A final question respecting Matrimony asks: "Can the bond or tie of marriage be ever broken?" We are to say:

A. "It never can, but by the death of the husband or wife."

Observe: This is the law of Christian marriage, the law which Christ Himself instituted or rather restored, it having been the primeval law as established by God Himself. Hence the pretension of Governments to dissolve the marriage tie, and render parties free to enter into new marriages is anti-Christian. The words of our Saviour are to last for ever. "*What God hath joined together, let no man put asunder.*" (*Matt.* xix. 6).

Q. Our next question asks: "Can the Sacraments be received more than once?" and we are instructed to say:

A. "All can, except Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Orders, which imprint on the soul a character or spiritual mark, which never can be effaced." Observe: The reason is, these Sacraments fix upon the soul, as they are received, a mark or impression.

which is to last for ever, both in this world and in the next, as well in hell as in heaven.

Q. Some of the Sacraments are more necessary than others, whence the Catechism asks: "Which Sacraments are most necessary to us?" and replies:

A. "Baptism and Penance." **Observe**: These are the Sacraments that release us from our sins, original and actual, and open to us the gates of Heaven, and are, therefore, more necessary than the other Sacraments.

Q. As a final question respecting the Sacraments in general, we are asked: "Why did Christ institute the Sacraments?" and the answer is:

A. "For the sanctification of our souls, and to prepare us for a happy and glorious resurrection." **Observe**: That is, to bestow holiness on our souls by the grace they confer, and by that means qualify us for a glorious resurrection, that soul and body we may be happy for ever and ever.

CONCLUSION.

Sum up and end with some reflections and sentiments in accordance with the subject.

LESSON XXX.

ON THE GENERAL JUDGMENT.

Q. The thirtieth, which is also the last, lesson of the Catechism, and which is to be the subject of our explanations this evening, commences with the question: "What means the resurrection of the body?" and answers by saying:

A. "That we shall, each and every one of us, rise from the dead, with the same body which we had in this life." **Observe**: That we shall all rise again from the dead, is an article of our faith. "*Behold,*" says St. Paul, "*I tell you a mystery, we shall all indeed rise again*" (1 *Cor.* xv. 51); and holy Job, long before St. Paul, said of himself, what we have all to say of ourselves: "*I know that my Redeemer liveth, and in the last day I shall rise out of the earth. And I shall be clothed again with my skin, and in my flesh I shall see my God. Whom I myself shall see, and my eyes shall behold, and not another: this my hope is laid up in my bosom.*" (*Job* xix. 25, 26, 27).

And the bodies we will have presented to us will be these same bodies that we have in this life. So, says St. Paul, "*This corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.*" (1 *Cor.* xv. 53).

The resurrection of the good and the bad will be very different: "*We shall all indeed rise again,*" says the Apostle, "*but we shall not all be changed.*" (1 *Cor.* xv. 51). Of the bodies of the good the Apostle says: "*It is sown in corruption, it shall rise in incorruption. It is sown in dishonour, it shall rise in glory. It is sown in weakness, it shall rise in power. It is sown a natural body, it shall rise a spiritual body.*" (1 *Cor.* xv. 42, 43, 44). In being thus changed in their properties, but remaining substantially and formally the same, the bodies of the good shall be invested with four glorious properties. The first is brightness, so as to shine more brilliantly than the sun in his greatest splendour. The second is agility, by which they will be able to pass from one extremity of the universe to the other with the rapidity of the lightning flash. The third is subtility, by which they will be able to penetrate the hardest substances without resistance or obstruction. The fourth is impassibility, by which they will be subject to no suffering of any kind, and be exempt from death. Whilst the bodies of the good will be the same, as we have observed, they will be free from the weakness of childhood, and the decreptitude of old age, as well as from any deformity or deficiency they may have had in this life, and will all rise in the freshness and vigour of middle age, the life attained by our Divine Lord here upon earth, or, as St. Paul would say it: "*Unto the measure of the age of the fulness of Christ.*" (*Ephes.* iv. 13).

The resurrection will also be instantaneous. "*In a moment,*" says St. Paul, "*in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall rise again.*" (1 *Cor.* xv. 52). Such will be the resurrection of the good.

But different, very different, will be the resurrection of the bad. They will indeed rise immortal, but their immortality will be their greater misery. Oh! if they could die, or cease to exist; but as St. John says, "*They shall seek death, and shall not find it; they shall desire to die, and death shall fly from them.*" (*Apoc.* ix. 6). Alas! the bodies of the damned shall come forth from the earth, deformed, hideous, and horrible to look at. What will be *our* resurrection, that of the elect, or of the

reprobate? It depends upon ourselves and the life we live, and upon the death we have before us.

Q. The resurrection is to take place on the last day; we are asked therefore: "What do you mean by the last day?" and we answer:

A. "The day of general judgment, when we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ; and then He will render to every one according to his works."

Observe: As soon as the resurrection will have taken place, all the children of Adam, from first to last, "*will*," as the Apostle tells us, "*be taken up in the clouds to meet Christ, into the air.*" (1 *Thess.* iv. 16). What a sight in the air! Like countless flocks of birds winging their way through the firmament, so will be the universal flocking of all mankind to the Valley of Josaphat, there "*to be manifested*," as the Apostle observes, "*before the judgment-seat of Christ, that every one may receive the proper things of the body, according as he hath done, whether it be good or evil.*" (2 *Cor.* v. 10).

Q. We are further asked: "If our bodies will rise united to our souls?" and we are taught to say:

A. "Yes; to share in the soul's eternal bliss or misery."

Observe: This is what God has ordained, "*because as men here upon earth yield their mortal members*," as St. Paul says, "*to serve uncleanness and iniquity, unto iniquity, or on the contrary to serve justice, unto sanctification*" (*Rom.* vi. 19); or in other words, as these bodies share with the soul in the evil or good we do, so God has ordained that they must share alike with her in the misery or happiness awaiting us in the world to come.

Q. We are next asked: "How are the bodies of the saints to rise?" and this we have already answered by saying:

A. "Glorious and immortal." **Observe**: Glorious by being invested with the four properties already mentioned, brightness, agility, subtility, and impassibility, and immortal by being thenceforth exempt from death.

Q. But as to the bodies of the damned, we are asked: "Are they to rise glorious?" We have already said, and have only now to repeat:

A. "No; but they shall rise immortal, to live for ever in eternal flames."

Q. The next question asks: "In what manner will Christ come to judge us?" and we answer in His own words:

A. "*In the clouds of heaven with much power and majesty.*" (*Matt.* xxiv. 30).

Observe: The resurrection has taken place, all mankind are assembled in the Valley of Josaphat, looking up, in trembling expectation of the Great Judge. The clouds open, the sign of the Son of Man appears, the Cross, as His royal Standard, borne by the Archangel Michael, and after it Himself, the great Conqueror of death and hell. O what a sight! A sight, at which, as He Himself foretells, all the tribes of the earth shall mourn: "*Men withering away for fear, and expectation of what shall come.*" (*Luke* xxi. 26). The Almighty Judge, however, descends, and seats Himself upon the throne, the judgment-seat, which the angels have prepared for the dreadful occasion. He surveys universal mankind assembled before Him; and, with a wave of His all-powerful hand. He "*shall separate them one from another, as the shepherd separateth the sheep from the goats: and He shall set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on His left.*" to receive their final irrevocable sentence. (*Matt.* xxv. 32, 33).

Q. But have they not undergone their sentence already, everyone by himself, and what necessity is there for a second sentence to confirm the first? This question the Catechism puts by asking: "As every one is judged immediately after death, what need is there of a general judgment?" and assigns the reason by saying:

A. "That the Providence of God, which often here permits the good to suffer, and the wicked to prosper, may appear just before all men."

Observe: In this world we are too prone to find fault with Providence at what we see. We see wicked men getting on comfortably through life, and we see, on the contrary, very good men meeting with great trials and afflictions, and we are inclined to say, how is this? and we murmur. Well, God will explain Himself at the last judgment, and show to all mankind assembled together that He was just in the dispensations of His Providence, and that all His judgments were righteous: so that all will be obliged to say, and confess in the words of the Apocalypse: "*Yea, O Lord God Almighty, true and just are Thy judgments.*" (*Apoc.* xvi. 7.)

Q. It only remains for the Judge to pronounce sentence: and we are asked, "What will He say to the good on the last day?" We answer in His own words:

A. "*Come, ye blessed of My Father, possess you the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.*" (*Matt.* xxv. 34.)

Observe: O what a happy invitation! Come from that vale of tears, that place of banishment; come, ye blessed of My Father, come and possess, not an estate or demesne, such as men covet upon earth; but come and take possession of a kingdom, no other than the kingdom of heaven, which has been prepared for you from the foundation of the world. Come and enjoy these seats of glory, from which the rebel angels fell; come and be inebriated with the plenty of My Father's house, and drink of the torrent of delight; enter into the glory of the Lord, to live and be happy with Him for ever and ever. O what a sentence! How enchanting to think that we can earn it, and merit it; and what should we not do to secure it?

Q. The happy sentence of the elect being pronounced: "What will Christ say to the wicked on the last day?" O terrible words! He has Himself already told them. They are:

A. "*Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, which was prepared for the devil and his angels.*" (*Matt.* xxv. 41).

Observe: O, what a thunderbolt! Depart from me: I would be your God, your Father, and your all, your supreme felicity for all eternity; but you have earned for yourselves a different lot, to be separated from Me for ever and ever! Depart from Me, and not only depart from Me, but take with you My curse. "*You would not have a blessing, and it shall be far from you; you did love cursing, and it shall come upon you.*" (*Ps.* cviii. 18). Begone from Me, you accursed! And where are they to go? Into everlasting fire, in comparison with which the fire we are acquainted with in this world is but as a shadow; that fire that shall never be extinguished; that fire prepared for the devil and his wicked companions, who are to be their companions also for ever and ever! Oh! what a sentence! what a sentence!

Q. We are then asked: "Where must the wicked go on the last day?" and we are to answer:

A. "They shall go, both body and soul, into everlasting punishment." **Observe:** Yes, no sooner shall their sentence have been pronounced, than the infernal abyss shall open beneath them, and swallow them down into those abodes of woe and torment! Oh! with what reason did St. Augustine cry out, and we should cry out with him, "here burn me, O Lord, here cut me asunder, here spare me not, provided Thou sparest me on that dreadful day."

Q. With respect to the just we are asked: "Where will they go on the last day?" and we reply:

A. "*The just will enter, with glorious and immortal bodies, into life eternal.*" (*Matt.* xxv. 46.) **Observe**: Yes, as soon as their happy sentence will have been pronounced, they will commence their canticles of joy, and enter body and soul into the joys of the Lord. O what should we not do to merit so blissful an end! O let us enter by the narrow gate, and walk in the straight way that leads to it, while we are here, in this valley of tears.

Q. We are asked: "What means life everlasting?" and we answer:

A. "It means that, if we serve God faithfully in this life, we shall be happy with Him for ever in heaven." **Observe**: This is the happy destiny for which we have been created and redeemed, and which is reserved for us, unless we by our own fault forfeit it.

Q. And we are next asked: "What is the happiness of heaven?" and we reply:

A. "To see God, to love and enjoy Him in the kingdom of His glory, for ever and ever." O yes, seeing God face to face, we shall be ravished with His love, and loving Him we shall be supremely happy, and that happiness is to last for ever.

Q. Finally we are asked: "What means Amen?" and we reply:

A. "So be it." **Observe**: This word is to resound for ever in the Court of God. For, when our Divine Lord will have put all things under His feet by the sentence He will have pronounced on the last day, He will deliver up His reign to God His Father, and having taken His place at His Father's right hand, the Angelic host shall encircle His throne, "*Saying with a loud voice: The Lamb that was slain, is worthy to receive power, and divinity, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and benediction. And every creature in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them: I heard all saying: To Him that sitteth on the throne, and to the Lamb, benediction, and honour, and glory, and power for ever and ever. And the four living creatures said Amen.*" (*Apoc.* v. 12, 13.)

APPENDIX.

GUIDE TO "THE PROGRAMMES OF SERMONS AND INSTRUCTIONS," POINTING OUT HOW THEY MAY BE ADAPTED TO THE GOSPELS OF THE SUNDAYS AND HOLIDAYS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR.

The "Programmes of Sermons and Instructions" were arranged for consecutive courses of Preaching on the various subjects comprised in the several parts, into which they are divided. This arrangement was by no means intended to disparage Homily-preaching as practised so generally in the treatment of the Gospels of the Mass appointed for the Sundays and Holidays in succession, in the order of the Liturgy throughout the year. Each mode has its special merit, and both have been employed by the Church from the beginning.

It appears to us desirable, nevertheless, to adapt the series pursued in the order of the "Programmes" to the Gospels, and thereby render them available for the treatment of the latter in Homily-style, according to the example of the Catechism of the Council of Trent in its "PRAXIS CATECHISMI, SEU CATECHISMUS IN SINGULAS ANNI DOMINICAS DISTRIBUTUS, ET EVANGELIIS ACCOMMODATUS," with a view to the same purpose. There will be, however, this difference, that whereas the "Praxis" quotes several texts in each Gospel, and gives several references to different subjects, the following guide will point out only one subject in each Gospel, whether the subject be suggested by the general scope of the Gospel, or by several passages, or only by a single text. There are examples in both directions by the Holy Fathers, and primitive Homily-Preachers, as we see in the specimens presented in the Divine office; and the practice seems to have been, that, when the Lector in his official capacity, had read the appointed portion of the Sacred Scriptures, the Bishop addressed the congregation, commenting upon it, or some passages contained in it, and sometimes he might confine himself even to a solitary text.

St. Francis of Sales discusses these various methods in his celebrated letter on Preaching to the Archbishop of Bourges, and giving its due merit to each, he prefers taking a single subject from each Gospel, whether furnished by the Gospel in a general view of it, or by a portion of it, or even by a particular text contained in it. His reasons, as he explains himself, are, that when a Preacher undertakes to deal with a number of passages, suggesting so many distinct subjects, he can merely touch them superficially, and in a desultory way, leaving on the minds of his audience only vague and incoherent views and impressions, whereas confining himself to one subject he can develop it fully, and inculcate its meaning with all due distinctness and force. Approving of the Saint's reasons, and happy to have so great an authority to rely upon, we shall shape our Guide so as to apply each Gospel to one particular subject, whether availing ourselves of the entire Gospel in a general view of it to that effect, or of a portion of it, or, as it may be, of a single passage; and in using it the Preacher, after having read the Gospel in the usual way, will link it with the subject indicated by some few prefatory words in the form of an introduction, according to the plan submitted in each of the following examples.

We begin with the first Sunday of Advent, as it is also the first Sunday of the year according to ecclesiastical computation, and we proceed from Sunday to Sunday in consecutive order, reserving the Festivals for the end, and arranging them likewise in the order in which they occur.

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT.

GOSPEL: *Luke* xxi. 25, 33.

SUBJECT: THE GENERAL JUDGMENT, OR THE RENEWAL OF THE WORLD AFTER THAT GREAT EVENT.

For the former see Programme 22 (*p.* 73), in the series on the Apostles' Creed, as also Programme 37 (*p.* 150). For the latter see Programme 38 (*p.* 154).

If the Particular Judgment has been treated on the previous Sunday, the General Judgment would follow appropriately on

this. If, however, the latter subject has been disposed of on the former Sunday, the Renewal of the world might form the subject for the first Sunday of the ecclesiastical year.

Introduction.

Sunday last was the last Sunday of the ecclesiastical year, and the Church in her Liturgy very appropriately brought before us the General Judgment, the final event which is to put an end to time, and throw open the unending duration of eternity. This Sunday, which begins a new ecclesiastical year, brings the same thrilling subject before our minds, that once again we may dwell upon it, and impress more deeply upon our souls the thought of an ordeal we all have to go through, and which is to be followed by an eternity of bliss or misery for all the children of Adam. It is with this formidable event impressed upon us, that the Church desires to introduce us into the new year she begins to-day, in order that, according to the exhortation of the Holy Ghost, "*we may in all our works remember our last end, and never sin.*" (*Eccl.* vii. 40). Let us, therefore, give ourselves as dutiful children to her holy guidance, that the reflections we may make upon the awful subject she desires to remind us of, may make their due impression on our hearts, and thereby preserve us from that greatest of all evils, the evil of sin, the only evil we will have to dread, when the Supreme Judge is to come in power and majesty to judge the living and the dead.

N.B.—If the Renewal of the world be selected as the subject, a slight modification made in this Introduction would make it suitable.

If the subject be treated catechetically, see Lesson xxx. in "Exposition of Christian Doctrine" Programmes. Part V.

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT.

Gospel: *Matt.* xi. 2, 10.

Subject: Sacrament of Penance. Its end, efficacy, necessity, obligation, and parts.

See Programme on the First Instruction on the Sacrament of Penance (*p.* 422); also Exposition of Christian Doctrine, Lesson xxvii. (*p.* 586).

Introduction.

John, who is spoken of in this Gospel, was John the Baptist. He is, otherwise, called the Precursor or Forerunner, on account of the office or mission assigned him to go before our Divine Lord, and prepare for Him the way, according to the inspired words of Zachary his father, "*for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare His ways.*" (*Luke* i. 76). This preparation was to consist in preaching Penance. Hence Penance was the constant subject of his preaching, as he exhorted all who flocked to listen to him, "*to bring forth fruits worthy of Penance. For,*" as he said, "*now the axe is laid to the root of the trees. Every tree, therefore, that bringeth not forth good fruit, shall be cut down and cast into the fire.*" (*Luke* iii. 8, 9). Now, the time of Advent is a time of preparation for the coming great solemnity of Christmas. This the word Advent itself denotes, which signifies the coming, or the approach, that is the coming or approach of the Nativity of our Divine Lord, or of the great Festival which commemorates His Nativity. Our preparation must be a preparation of Penance in accordance with the preaching of St. John, and therefore the Church brings before us his mission and preaching during the holy season of Advent, that we may prepare to celebrate worthily the Festival we are approaching. But what is to be our Penance?

Penance for us Christians, as we know, consists in availing ourselves of the Sacrament of Penance by complying with all the conditions necessary to obtain the remission of our sins in that holy Sacrament. Hence the Sacrament of Penance should occupy our thoughts during the holy season of Advent, on which account we will, in God's name, make this the subject of the words I wish to address to you in this day's instruction.

A few words of invocation, after which proceed with the subject, stating it to be on the end, efficacy, necessity, and obligation of the Sacrament of Penance.

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT.

GOSPEL: *John* i. 19, 28.

SUBJECT: CONTRITION.

See Programme of Fourth Instruction on the Sacrament of Penance (*p.* 428); as also Lesson xxviii. Exposition of Christian Doctrine (*p.* 596).

INTRODUCTION.

Advent is a time of preparation for the coming great solemnity of Christmas, on which we celebrate the Nativity of our Divine Lord or His coming into this world. Therefore, the Church in the Gospel of this day brings again before her children the mission and preaching of the Precursor John the Baptist, whose special office it was to prepare mankind for the coming of our Blessed Lord and Saviour amongst them. He was, indeed, thought to be our Saviour Himself, and when he so emphatically declared he was not, it was considered that he might be Elias or a Prophet. This too he peremptorily denied, and when he was pressed to tell who he was, he humbly said he was "*the voice of one crying in the wilderness, make straight the way of the Lord;*" and as he was further asked, why he baptized, he said he baptized, indeed, with water, but that there stood in the midst of them one whom they knew not, meaning our Saviour Himself, the latchet of whose shoe he confessed himself he was not worthy to loose.

As John cried out in the wilderness, calling upon mankind to make straight the way of the Lord, that is to remove all obstacles and impediments that would obstruct His coming, and as he baptized with water unto penance, so does the Church, during the holy season of Advent, call out to her children to prepare for the spiritual birth of our Divine Lord in their hearts at Christmas, and for this purpose to remove every obstacle that would hinder so great a happiness. Now it is only by doing penance for their sins this is to be effected: and as sin is committed within the the soul, it is within the soul likewise that the chief part of

penance must be performed by a true and hearty sorrow or contrition for sin. This then is to be the subject of our Instruction to-day, the contrition necessary for a good confession, in order to obtain pardon of our sins in the Sacrament of Penance.

Invocation, after which proceed to the subject.

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT.

GOSPEL: *Luke* iii. 1, 6.

SUBJECT: PURPOSE OF AMENDMENT.

See Programme, Fifth Instruction on the Sacrament of Penance (*p.* 429); as also Lesson xxviii., Exposition of Christian Doctrine (*p.* 596).

INTRODUCTION.

The great Festival is at hand—the Festival of our Divine Lord's Nativity. During this holy season of Advent, the voice of one crying in the wilderness—the voice of the Precursor has been frequently sounded in our ears, exhorting mankind to prepare the way of the Lord by doing penance for their sins. This voice the Church adopts, and makes it her own to exhort her children to prepare for the worthy celebration of the great solemnity of Christmas. This day's Gospel in repeating the words of Isaias the Prophet, "*Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight His paths*," adds, moreover, from the same Prophet the very significant words, "*Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways plain. And all flesh shall see the salvation of God.*" This is figurative language, and it means simply, that penance to be true and real must produce an entire reformation of life and manners, and must, therefore, amongst its other conditions, include a purpose of amendment. This then is to be the subject, on which we are to entertain ourselves to-day, and we will look into ourselves to see, if, approaching the great solemnity now so near, we are bringing to its celebration a purpose, a determination of sinning no more, and of proving before God and man that our repentance is sincere by the amendment it will realize in our lives and manners.

Invocation, and then proceed with the subject.

SUNDAY WITHIN THE OCTAVE OF CHRISTMAS.

GOSPEL: *Luke* ii. 33, 40.

SUBJECT: JESUS CHRIST—OUR FAITH IN HIM.

See Programme of Thirteenth Discourse on the Apostles' Creed (*p.* 47); also Lesson iv., Exposition of Christian Doctrine (*p.* 483).

INTRODUCTION.

This Gospel brings before us the scene in the Temple, on the occasion of our Divine Saviour's Presentation. He was in the arms of His blessed Mother like any other child. But there was a venerable old man in the Temple at the same time, the holy Simeon, to whom God had promised, that before his death he would have the happiness of seeing the Saviour of the world. It also happened that a holy old widow named Anna, then 80 years of age, entered the Temple, who spent almost all her time in it, fasting and praying, and serving God day and night, as the Gospel mentions. Now, all others, who might have been in the Temple at the time, saw nothing different in our infant Saviour from any other child. But a Divine revelation made Him known to these holy souls, Simeon and Anna, and they not only believed in Him interiorly, but confessed Him outwardly, and spoke of Him to all *that looked for the redemption of Israel.* Now, the object of the Church in bringing before our minds this most interesting passage in the infancy of our Divine Lord is to invite us to approach Him as He lies in the crib of Bethlehem, that with the eyes of Faith we may acknowledge and confess Him as true God and true man, under the poor and humble appearance in which He presents Himself to us in His Nativity. Let us, therefore, approach our infant God, and as, according to the words of the Apostle, *with the heart we believe unto justice: but with the mouth confession is made unto salvation* (*Rom.* x. 10), let us believe in Him and confess that belief according to the teaching of our holy Mother the Church, "*The pillar and ground of truth.*" (1 *Tim.* iii. 15.)

Invocation, after which proceed to the subject.

FIRST SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY.

GOSPEL : *Luke* ii. 42, 52.

SUBJECT: DUTIES OF CHILDREN TO PARENTS.

See Programme, First Discourse on the Fourth Commandment (*p.* 221); also Exposition of Christian Doctrine, Lesson xvii. (*p.* 532).

INTRODUCTION.

This Gospel tells us of how our Divine Lord, when twelve years of age, went up to Jerusalem in company with Mary, His Immaculate Mother, and His foster-father Joseph, and how He remained after them when they had left to return home, and how they, after a three days' search, found Him in the Temple in the midst of the Doctors of the Law, hearing them and asking them questions. When Mary lovingly complained to Him of His having acted in the manner He did, He explained that He had remained on the business of His Eternal Father, and then giving Himself up to her and her holy spouse Joseph, *He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was subject to them, and advanced in wisdom, and age, and grace with God and men.*

"*He was subject to them.*" These are most extraordinary words. He who was God from the beginning, by Whom all things were made, and without Whom nothing was made, of the things that were made, is subject to His own creatures, as a child to his parents, and, what is still more wonderful, this is all the Scripture tells us of Him thenceforth for eighteen years, that is, till the thirtieth year of His age, when He entered on His public Ministry. He was subject to them all this time, as a dutiful son to his parents. What an example! and with this example before us, what subject can be more appropriate for us to dwell upon than the duties which children owe to their parents, according not only to the positive Law of God, but according also to the dictates of the natural law itself?

Invocation, and proceed to the subject.

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY.

GOSPEL: *Luke* ii. 21.

SUBJECT: BAPTISM.

See Programme, Instruction on Baptism, On the Sacraments (*p.* 397); as also Lesson xxiv., Exposition of Christian Doctrine (*p.* 567).

INTRODUCTION.

This Gospel tells us of the Circumcision of our Divine Lord. Circumcision in the Old Law foreshadowed Baptism in the New. It was in performing the ceremony of Circumcision a name was given to the newly-born child. So also is it in Baptism that the Christian child receives its name. Circumcision was the sign or seal of the covenant between God and the Jewish people, instituted by God Himself with the Patriarch Abraham. Baptism is the great Christian covenant whereby we are made children of God, brethren of Jesus Christ, and co-heirs with Him to the kingdom of heaven. Circumcision was the remedy for Original Sin in the Old Law; so is Baptism in the New Law. Therefore, the mystery of our Divine Saviour's Circumcision should dispose us to think of our own Baptism, the consideration of which presents several points of most salutary instruction. Let us, therefore, raise our thoughts on high, and beg of God to enlighten us on a subject so intimately bound up with our salvation; and let us also ask of the Saint whose name we bear, to obtain for us the grace of walking in his footsteps, according to his blessed example during his mortal life here upon earth.

Proceed to the subject.

SAME SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY.

GOSPEL: *John* ii. 1, 11.

SUBJECT: MATRIMONY.

See Programme on the subject On the Sacraments (*p.* 452); as also Lesson xxix., Exposition of Christian Doctrine (*p.* 602).

Introduction.

This Gospel gives us an account of a marriage at which our Blessed Lord and His Immaculate Mother assisted. Marriage is the great hinge of life for better or worse, involving the alternative in so many cases of happiness or misery, not only for this life, but for the life to come. The Catechism asks a question, with which we are all familiar, "What is the reason so many marriages prove unhappy?" and we know the answer: it is "Because many enter into that holy state from unworthy motives, and with guilty consciences; therefore, their marriages are not blessed by God." It is, therefore, of the highest importance that Christians should be thoroughly acquainted with what our holy religion teaches on a subject fraught with consequences so decisive for good or evil, not only as regards their temporal interests, but also the interests of their immortal souls.

Invocation, and proceed to the subject.

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY.

Gospel: *Matt.* viii. 1, 13.

Subject: Duties of Masters and Mistresses and Persons in authority towards Servants and those under them.

See Programme on this subject, the fourth on the Fourth Commandment (*p.* 227); also Lesson xvii., Exposition of Christian Doctrine (*p.* 529).

Introduction.

This Gospel gives an account of two miracles performed by our Divine Lord, which display in a wonderful way His power and goodness in the instantaneous cure of a man afflicted with leprosy, and the cure of the centurion's servant. The solicitude of the centurion for his servant went far to induce our merciful Saviour to comply with his request. O, that all masters and mistresses and persons in authority were equally solicitous for the welfare, spiritual and temporal, of their servants and those

under their charge. Let us, therefore, in God's name, take occasion from the example of this good man to make some reflections on this great branch of Christian duty, the obligations of masters, mistresses, and all persons in authority towards their servants and those under them.

Invocation, and proceed to the subject.

FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY.

GOSPEL: *Matt.* viii. 23, 27.

SUBJECT: FAITH.

See Programme of First Discourse on First Commandment (*p.* 208); also Lesson xiv., Exposition of Christian Doctrine (*p.* 519),

INTRODUCTION.

"*Why are you fearful, O ye of little faith.*" These words of our Divine Lord present to us a most salutary subject of instruction, the subject of Divine Faith. O, if we believed as we ought, with a firm unreserved Faith based upon God's eternal veracity, and the authority of His Church, which is the pillar and ground of truth, doubtless, we would lead better lives, and walk in a manner more worthy of our vocation as Christians, and "*domestics of the Faith.*" Let us, therefore, lift our hearts to God, begging of Him beforehand that He will vouchsafe to us His grace to understand well all that concerns our spiritual welfare in a virtue so precious in His sight, and so necessary for our guidance and support in the pilgrimage of this world.

Proceed to the subject.

FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY.

GOSPEL: *Matt.* xiii. 24, 30.

SUBJECT: ETERNITY.

See Programme of Forty-second Discourse, the fifth on the Twelfth Article of the Apostles' Creed (*p.* 182.)

Introduction.

In the Parable of this Gospel, mankind are compared to good seed a man has sown in his field, and cockle seed sown stealthily in the same field by an enemy. Both sprout up together, the good seed sending forth its stem, and the cockle its stem likewise, which was a kind of noxious weed. The servants suggested to the master to have the cockle pulled up, but the master said, "No, but let both grow together, and the reapers will separate them in making the harvest." Just so, good men and bad men live on together in this life, God so permitting, but the harvest is to come, the end of the world, when by the ministry of His angels the Supreme Judge will separate them, placing the good on the right for eternal happiness in heaven, and the bad on the left for eternal misery in hell. O eternity! What a word! and eternity in heaven or in hell, what a thought! And to bring this thought more home to ourselves, will there not be a separation amongst us here present, some of us, let us hope, to find ourselves on the right, whilst others, fearful to think, shall find themselves on the left, amongst the children of everlasting perdition.

O, if we had this thought of eternity always before our minds how could we remain in sin? Let us, therefore, think on it in time, for when it comes, our lot shall have been decided, for, on whatever side the tree falls, whether to the south or the north, there must it remain for ever and ever.

Invocation, after which proceed to the subject.

SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY.

Gospel: *Matt.* xiii. 31, 35.

Subject: Scandal.

See Programme on the subject, Fourth Discourse on the Fifth Commandment (*p.* 240).

Introduction.

This Gospel contains two Parables, one, that of the mustard seed, and the other, that of leaven used in leavening bread. These Parables are susceptible of various interpretations, for the

word of God abounds in significance, and serves for our instruction in its various meanings and acceptations. The mustard seed imparts its pungency to whatever matter it may be mixed in, and the leaven also imparts its savour to the dough, in which it is put for baking. So men are mixed with men, and, as they are good or bad, they impart an influence for good or evil to those amongst whom they live. But, unfortunately, we are more easily depraved by our mixing with bad men, than we are led to virtue by those who are good and virtuous. Hence the great importance of being on our guard against bad example, or, in other words, against Scandal, the sin committed, when by his conduct in acts or words, one man leads another into sin, "*Woe to that man by whom scandal cometh*," says our Divine Lord. (*Matt.* xviii. 7). O, that we had this maxim engraven on our hearts! How many sins would be prevented amongst mankind of every age, but especially amongst the young. Let us, therefore, give our best attention to so important a subject, that with God's grace we may escape the woes pronounced by our Blessed Lord against the scandal-giver.

Invocation, and Proceed to the subject.

SEPTUAGESIMA SUNDAY.

Gospel : *Matt.* xx. 1, 16.

Subject : A Happy Death.

See Programme on the subject, the Thirty-sixth Discourse on the Apostles' Creed (*p.* 145).

Introduction.

The Parable of this day's Gospel is highly instructive. In its interpretation, God is the householder, and we are labourers, labouring in this life for a reward to be given us in the next. The vineyard is the service of God in its widest sense, and the several hours of the day signify various periods in the course of our mortal life. God calls us into His service in the early dawn of life. If we do not comply, He calls us again and again, adding sometimes promises, other times reproaches and expostulations; nor does He desist even to the eleventh hour, or the

close of our days in this world. Now, we should look to the end we have before us as the great motive we have of giving ourselves to God to love and serve Him, the end awaiting us all, the death we have to undergo, and which is to put an end to our toil and labour here below, and, if a happy death, is to earn for us the blissful sentence: "*Well done, good and faithful servant; because thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will place thee over many things: enter thou into the joy of Thy Lord.*" (*Matt.* xxv. 23). O how we should desire such a death! how we should labour for it, and labour during our entire lives. To excite this desire, and to sustain us in this labour we will, in God's holy name, make some reflections on the subject of a happy death, in the hope of the reward to which it is the passage, as we will have to bid farewell to all things here below.

Proceed to the subject.

SEXAGESIMA SUNDAY.

Gospel: *Luke* viii. 4, 15.

Subject: Spiritual Reading.

See Programme on the subject (*p.* 378).

Introduction.

The Parable of this Gospel is very instructive. The sower is Almighty God Himself. The seed He sows is His own Divine Word, as our Blessed Lord explains. The various kinds of soil on which it is sown, denote the various dispositions of those who receive God's word, on account of which it produces no fruit in some, whilst in others it produces fruit a hundred fold. Now, God's Word is communicated to us in different ways, one of which, and a very ordinary one, is the reading of pious books, or pious reading. This is a most important subject, on which we shall find it profitable to bestow some considerations. Let me, therefore, beg your earnest attention, and let us lift up our hearts to the Almighty, whose Word we are going to speak of, &c., &c.

Proceed to the subject.

QUINQUAGESIMA SUNDAY.

GOSPEL: *Luke* xviii. 31, 43.

SUBJECT: CONDITIONS OF PRAYER.

See Programme on the subject, the Third on Prayer (*p.* 304).

INTRODUCTION.

This Gospel gives an account of a remarkable miracle our Divine Saviour performed on a blind man by restoring his sight. This great mercy He bestowed upon this poor man was owing in a great measure to the earnestness and perseverance with which he sought it. Prayer, as St. Augustine teaches, is the key of heaven, by which we unlock to ourselves the Divine treasures. But it is not enough to pray in any sort of way; we must accompany our prayers with certain conditions, in order that we may meet acceptance at the throne of grace. How important, therefore, is it not, that we should thoroughly understand these conditions, in order that when we pray we may be favourably heard in the Court of Heaven. The conditions of prayer will, consequently, form the subject of our instruction, and, as we enter upon it, let us beg of the Father of Lights, from whom *every best gift and every perfect gift descends*, to enlighten us, &c., &c.

Proceed to the subject.

ASH-WEDNESDAY.

GOSPEL: *Matt.* vi. 16, 21.

SUBJECT: DEATH.

See Programme on the subject, the Thirty-fourth Discourse on the Apostles' Creed (*p.* 138).

INTRODUCTION.

We enter upon the holy and penitential season of Lent to-day, and the Gospel of the Mass brings before our minds that fasting and abstinence are to constitute the chief part of our penitential

observances. The Church desires to urge these observances upon us by reminding us of our departure out of this world, as she says to us in putting ashes on our heads or foreheads, "*Remember man, that dust thou art, and into dust thou shalt return.*" We will, therefore, conform ourselves with the wishes of the Church in entertaining ourselves with this momentous subject, recollecting the words of the Holy Ghost, "*In all thy works remember thy last end, and thou shalt never sin.*" (*Eccl.* vii. 40).

Invocation, and proceed to the subject.

FIRST SUNDAY OF LENT.

GOSPEL: *Matt.* iv. 1, 11.

SUBJECT: FASTING AND ABSTINENCE.

See Programme on the second Precept of the Church (*p.* 278).

INTRODUCTION.

Our Divine Saviour presents Himself to us in this day's Gospel as our example in complying with the obligation of fasting and abstinence required by the holy ordinance of Lent. He was pleased to fast forty days; hence forty days is the period, likewise, of our Lenten fast. It is, therefore, in accordance with His Divine example, and the law of the Church, that we should be thoroughly acquainted with the obligation and condition of fasting and abstaining, in order to pass this holy time in a manner pleasing to God and salutary to our own souls. Let us, however, begin by invoking the Divine blessing, &c., &c.

Invocation, and proceed to the subject

SECOND SUNDAY OF LENT.

GOSPEL: *Matt.* xvii. 1, 9.

SUBJECT: HEAVEN.

See Programme on the subject, the Fortieth Discourse on the Apostles' Creed (*p* 167).

INTRODUCTION.

This Gospel tells us of what is called the Transfiguration of our Divine Lord. He was graciously pleased in this mystery to afford His three Apostles, Peter, James, and John, a view of Himself, encompassed with that brightness and glory, which were due to His sacred Humanity, but which He concealed from the eyes of men, because it was too much for mortal eyes to behold so transporting a spectacle. Even beholding it for a moment, the Apostles swooned away, and when they recovered themselves, not knowing what to say, Peter gave vent to his sensations by saying, "*Lord, it is good for us to be here. If Thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles, one for Thee, one for Moses, and one for Elias.*" In this manifestation of Himself our Blessed Lord gave the Apostles to behold a glimpse of the glory awaiting them in heaven, the glory encompassing His sacred Humanity at the right hand of the Father—a glory so enchanting, that St. Augustine said, that he would be ready to go through the torments of hell, if necessary, in order to behold it. The mystery, therefore, of this day's Gospel lifts up our minds to our heavenly country, to contemplate the happiness that awaits us, if, true to our own best interests, we walk in the narrow path that conducts to so happy a destination. O, what should we not do and suffer to merit so great a happiness; and, if our poor human nature murmur against the fasting and austerities of this holy time, let us encourage ourselves by what the Apostle tells us, "*That the sufferings of this time are not worthy to be compared with the glory to come, that shall be revealed in us.*" (*Rom.* viii. 18).

O, heaven! O, the happiness of heaven! O, heavenly glory! What a subject to think of. On entering upon it, let us beg of God to assist us by His Divine grace, &c., &c.

Proceed to the subject.

THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT.

GOSPEL: *Luke* xi. 14, 28.

SUBJECT: THE FALLEN ANGELS.

See Programme on the subject, Sixth Discourse on the First Article of the Apostles' Creed (*p.* 19).

Introduction.

This Gospel gives us a view into a world, where the eyes of our body see nothing, but where the eyes of our soul, enlightened by faith, have much to behold. It is the spiritual world, a world as real as the material world which we see around us. In this spiritual world we have to fight the battle of our salvation against the powers of hell, and we see in this day's Gospel what forces Satan has at his command to accomplish our eternal ruin, if he can. What a subject to think on! How important and thrilling! Our happiness or misery for all eternity are bound up with it. Let us, therefore, beg of God to open the eyes of our soul, and to shed upon them the light of His Divine countenance, that seeing the enemies we have to fight against on our way through this life, we may arm ourselves for the conflict, and fight the good fight in view of the crown of immortal glory that will reward our victory.

Proceed to the subject.

FOURTH SUNDAY OF LENT.

Gospel: *John* vi. 1, 15.

Subject: Paschal Communion.

See Programme on the Fourth Precept of the Church (*p.* 284), as also the Fifth Instruction on the Blessed Eucharist (*p.* 412), and Exposition of Christian Doctrine, Lesson xxvii. (*p.* 586).

Introduction.

The extraordinary miracle of this day's Gospel, whereby our Divine Lord feeds five thousand men with five barley loaves and two fishes, is a figure of that still more wonderful miracle whereby He feeds the whole world with His own most Sacred Body and Blood in the adorable Sacrament of the Blessed Eucharist. Easter is near, and the Precept of Easter Communion is soon to call upon all the children of the Church to approach the Holy Communion. What subject should be more precious for us to entertain ourselves with than this great Christian

duty. Let us, therefore, give ourselves to our Blessed Lord, that He may enlighten us by His grace from above in our duty towards Him in this endearing mystery of His love for mankind, &c.

Proceed to the subject.

PASSION SUNDAY.

GOSPEL: *John* viii. 46, 59.

SUBJECT: IMMEDIATE PREPARATION, MANNER OF RECEIVING THE HOLY COMMUNION AND THANKSGIVING AFTER.

See Programme of Sixth Instruction on the Blessed Eucharist (*p.* 415); also Exposition of Christian Doctrine, Lesson xxvii. (*p.* 586).

INTRODUCTION.

We see in this day's Gospel how our Blessed Lord being near His Sacred Passion was contradicted, and persecuted, and outraged by the Jews, so that He withdrew from the Temple, and hid Himself from their violence. In memory of this the Church shrouds her altars, and sacred pictures, and other emblems, thereby hiding them from view. But we are to consider another concealment of our Divine Lord during this holy time—a concealment in which, according to the expression of Isaias, "*He is truly a hidden God*" (*Isa.* xlv. 15), where the eyes of flesh cannot discover Him, but where He discovers Himself to the eyes of Faith—the concealment of the outward appearances of bread and wine, under which appearances He desires to be approached, especially in fulfilment of the great Precept of Paschal Communion. It should, therefore, be the study of all true Christians, how they are to comply with this most important duty. We will, therefore, consider, in what we are going to say, how we should approach our Divine Lord in this mystery of His love, how we are to receive Him, and how, after having received Him, we are to prove ourselves grateful by suitable acts of thanksgiving for so great a gift on the part of God towards us vile worms of the earth.

Invocation, and proceed to the subject.

PALM SUNDAY.

GOSPEL: *Matt.* XXVI., XXVII.

SUBJECT: DEVOTION TO THE PASSION OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.

See Programme on the subject (*p.* 305).

INTRODUCTION.

This is a week of sadness and mourning. We lament this week the death not of a father or a mother, but of One Who loved us more than father and mother, Who, not by necessity or constraint, but by the promptings of His spontaneous love, laid down His life and spilt His blood to the last drop on our account. As we look with a steady gaze during this week upon the crucifix, does it not say to us, "*Greater love than this no man hath, that a man should lay down his life for his friends.*" (*John* xv. 13). O, it says infinitely more—it says to us, that whereas being sinners we were His enemies, and His justice called aloud for our punishment, our loving Saviour nevertheless offered Himself for us a Victim of Propitiation to make satisfaction for our offences. Will we not therefore spend this week in deep sympathy with our suffering Saviour, and lay up in our inmost soul an abiding and ceaseless devotion to his Sacred Passion?

Let us beg of God to pour down from on high His blessing on the reflections we are going to make, with a view to this blessed result.

Proceed to the subject.

GOOD FRIDAY.

See Eighteenth Discourse on the Apostles' Creed (*p.* 62).

EASTER SUNDAY.

See Nineteenth Discourse on the Apostles' Creed (*p.* 64).

LOW SUNDAY.

GOSPEL: *John* xx. 19, 31.

SUBJECT: JUSTIFICATION, OR WHAT IS EFFECTED IN THE SOUL BY BAPTISM AND PENANCE.

See Ninth Instruction on the Sacrament of Penance (*p.* 434).

INTRODUCTION.

This Gospel, amongst other most interesting particulars, presents to us an account of the concession by our Divine Lord of the extraordinary power He was mercifully pleased to grant to His Church of forgiving sin and restoring sinners to the grace and friendship of God. This is a wonderful transition indeed, a transition which is regarded with joy from the heights of heaven; for our Divine Lord assures us that "*there shall be joy in heaven upon one sinner that doth penance.*" (*Luke* xv. 7). This transition is also and for every reason a subject of joy and gladness here on earth, and we can never thank God sufficiently for His mercy and goodness to mankind in instituting a means by which the sinner can accomplish such a transition. This day is called "Dominica in Albis," that is "Sunday in Whites," on account of the white dress worn anciently in the Church by persons baptized on Easter Saturday, as emblematic of the purity of soul acquired by the Sacrament. They wore the dress the whole of Easter week, and laid it aside on the following, that is on this Sunday. This observance, as we recall it, together with the words of our Blessed Lord, whereby He granted to His Church the power of forgiving sins, brings naturally before our minds the whole subject of justification, or, in other words, the change that takes place in the soul, as it passes from a state of sin to a state of grace. Let us beg of God to give us the grace we stand in need of in the reflections we are going to make, that we understand, as far as it is given to the human mind to understand, a subject so intimately bound up with our eternal welfare, &c., &c.

Proceed to the subject.

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

GOSPEL: *John* x. 11, 16.

SUBJECT: THE HAPPINESS OF BELONGING TO THE TRUE CHURCH.

See Programme of the Thirty-second Discourse on the Apostles' Creed (*p.* 127).

INTRODUCTION.

In this Gospel our Divine Saviour speaks of Himself as the Good Shepherd. He also speaks of His sheep. He says of Himself that He knows His sheep, and that they know Him, and that He lays down His life for His sheep. He adds that He has other sheep that are not of His fold, but that He is to bring them into it, so that there be but one fold and one Pastor. Under this figurative language our Divine Lord would convey to us that the Church is like a sheepfold, that the faithful are like sheep under Him as their Supreme Pastor, and that there was to be but one fold, that is but one Church, to which all true Christians should belong, and out of which there was to be no salvation.

What a happiness to belong to this one true Church under Jesus Christ, as its Supreme Head; and what thanks do we owe to the Almighty for this happiness? We will, in God's name, bestow some reflections on this subject, and in order that we may do so with advantage, let us lift up our minds on high, and beg of our Good Shepherd, &c., &c.

Proceed to the subject.

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

GOSPEL: *John* xvi. 16, 22.

SUBJECT: THE CHURCH, HER PROPERTIES AND DISTINCTIVE NOTES OR MARKS.

See Programme of the Twenty-eighth Discourse on the Apostles' Creed (*p.* 99).

INTRODUCTION.

In the Gospel you have heard read, our Divine Lord seeks to prepare His Apostles and Disciples for the withdrawal of His visible presence from amongst them.

After He had risen from the dead, He still remained on earth for forty days. During this time He frequently appeared to His Apostles, and instructed them as to how they were to carry out the great commission He had confided to them of extending throughout the world the Church, "*which*," according to the words of St. Paul, "*He hath purchased with His own blood.*" (*Acts* xx. 28). He told them, that, in a short time, they were not to see Him, and in a short time they were to see Him again, and their hearts were to rejoice, and their joy no one was to take away from them. In effect He is always with His Church, according to His own most gracious assurance, "*behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world*" (*Matt.* xxviii. 20), aiding her in her Divine Mission amongst mankind. He was pleased to make His Church conspicuous to the whole world, like a city placed on a mountain, according to His own description of her. This He did by the properties with which He invested her, and the notes or marks he impressed upon her. He foresaw that heresies would arise in course of time, and cause confusion in the world, all and each of them claiming to be His true Church; and, therefore, He gave to mankind the means of discerning, and recognising amongst these heretical sects, the Church —the one true Church He Himself had instituted. These means consist in the properties, as I have said, He invested her with, and the notes or marks He set upon her. It should be, therefore, very interesting to take account of these properties and notes, and, I am sure, I need hardly ask your patient attention, as I shall endeavour to lay them before you.

Invocation, and proceed to the subject.

FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

GOSPEL: *John* xvi. 5, 14.

SUBJECT: THE HOLY GHOST.

See Programme of Twenty-third Discourse on the Apostles' Creed (*p.* 75).

INTRODUCTION.

Our Divine Lord, foreseeing the sorrow and grief His Apostles and Disciples should feel on His departure from amongst them, consoled them beforehand by telling them He would send them the Holy Ghost, whom He termed the Paraclete, that is the comforter or consoler. He was to send Him not only on their account, in their mortal day, but on our account, at this distance of time, and on account also of all mankind to the end of time, for our Blessed Saviour said, that coming, this Divine Person would remain for ever. (*John* xiv. 16). We will, therefore, entertain ourselves in considering what our holy Faith teaches us respecting Him, and in order that we may do so with the greater spiritual profit, let us, &c.

Invocation, and proceed to the subject.

FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER EASTER.

GOSPEL: *John* xvi. 23, 30.

SUBJECT: EFFICACY OF PRAYER.

See Programme on the subject (*p.* 303); also Lesson xxii., Exposition of Christian Doctrine (*p.* 555).

INTRODUCTION.

In this Gospel our Divine Lord speaks very encouragingly of Prayer, and His words are in accordance with what we find laid down in various passages of the Holy Scriptures, and attested by the most remarkable facts respecting the power and efficacy of prayer. Let us, therefore, in God's name, bestow some reflections on the subject. It is vitally interesting to us, involving as it does our dearest interests, spiritual and temporal, for the world and still more for the world to come.

Invocation, and proceed to the subject.

SUNDAY WITHIN THE OCTAVE OF THE ASCENSION.

GOSPEL: *John* xv. 26, to xvi. 4.

SUBJECT: THE HOLY GHOST AUTHOR OF OUR SANCTIFICATION.

See Programme of the Twenty-fifth Discourse on the Apostles' Creed (*p.* 83).

INTRODUCTION.

Our Divine Lord before His Ascension frequently spoke of the Holy Ghost to His Apostles and Disciples, and promised to send Him to them for their consolation, and to confirm them in the knowledge of the truths He Himself had taught them. He was true to His promise, and we are within eight days of the Festival which commemorates this great event. On this account the Church desires, that we should duly prepare ourselves for its worthy celebration, and she accordingly brings before us our Blessed Saviour's words, in which He spoke to His disciples beforehand of the mission of the Holy Ghost. His mission was manifold, but He came especially for the sanctification of our souls, so that, as the Eternal Father created us for heaven, and as the Eternal Son redeemed us after we had forfeited, in the sin of our first parents, our right to that blessed kingdom, so the Holy Ghost vouchsafed to sanctify us, and thereby share with the other two Divine Persons in the great work of our salvation.

Our Blessed Lord desired His Apostles and Disciples to prepare beforehand by retirement and prayer for the coming of the Divine Spirit, and the Church desires also that we should prepare ourselves to celebrate the Festival recalling so great a mystery, in order that we may largely participate in the fruits of sanctification to be reaped from its worthy celebration. Let us, therefore, dispose ourselves with this view to consider the mission of the Holy Ghost as the sanctifier of our souls, and, that we may the better do so, let us invoke His Divine assistance, saying, Come, O Holy Ghost, &c.

Proceed to the subject.

WHIT-SUNDAY.

GOSPEL : *John* xiv. 23, 31.

SUBJECT : THE HOLY GHOST. HIS MISSION FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT AND GOVERNMENT OF THE CHURCH.

See Programme of Twenty-fourth Discourse on the Apostles' Creed (*p.* 81).

INTRODUCTION.

On this Sunday, commonly called Whit-Sunday, we celebrate the Descent of the Holy Ghost. Our Divine Lord, before His Ascension, had frequently promised His Apostles and Disciples that He would send this Divine Spirit to them, and on Sunday the tenth day after He had ascended from the top of Mount Olivet in their presence, He fulfils His promise, in the great event of this day's celebration. Amongst the various purposes for which the Holy Ghost descended on earth, a principal one was to aid the Apostles in the establishment of the Church, and, thenceafter, to preside over her in directing and ruling her to the end of time. How beneficent this mission, and how salutary to mankind! We will, in God's name, take it as the subject of the reflections we desire to make on this day, which is so precious to the Church on account of the great mystery it solemnizes, and in order to derive greater advantage from what we are going to say, let us invoke the aid of the Holy Ghost himself, to enlighten us and guide us by His Divine grace.

Proceed with the subject.

TRINITY SUNDAY.

GOSPEL : *Matt.* xxviii. 18, 20.

SUBJECT : THE MOST HOLY TRINITY.

See Programme of Ninth Discourse on the first Article of the Apostles' Creed (*p.* 34.)

INTRODUCTION.

This Sunday, the first Sunday after Pentecost, the Church calls Trinity Sunday. In the Apostles' Creed we express our

belief in Three Divine Persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and we further hold as of Divine Faith that, though these three Divine Persons are really distinct, and each of them God, nevertheless, there is but one God. This is a fundamental mystery of the Christian Religion, which the Church desires to set prominently before the minds of her children, and for the celebration of which she has appointed a special Sunday, the first Sunday after Pentecost. We will, therefore, enter into the views of our holy Mother the Church, and try to make some reflections on this mystery, which is hidden in God, and which we are required to believe and profess on the authority of His unerring word.

Proceed to the subject.

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

GOSPEL: *Luke* xiv. 16, 24.

SUBJECT. THE SACRAMENTS IN GENERAL.

See Programme on the subject (*p.* 395); also Lesson xxiv., Exposition of Christian Doctrine (*p.* 567).

INTRODUCTION.

The Parable of this Gospel speaks of a great supper a certain man made. He invited many guests, but for various reasons they declined his invitation, whereupon he sent his servants out into the highways and hedges, to invite whomsoever they might meet and to compel them to come into the supper. To understand the instruction contained in this Parable, we are to consider, in the first place, the man mentioned as preparing a great supper, to represent our Divine Lord. In the second place, we are to consider the supper to be the Sacraments He has instituted for the nourishment of our souls. In the next place, the guests invited mean the faithful at large, many of whom, engaged in the pursuit of honours, riches, and pleasures, yield to these temptations, and refuse accepting the invitation. These temptations exist everywhere, and at all times, and that we may not yield to them, we will consider how precious is the food that our Divine Lord has prepared for us in the Sacraments; and we shall see,

with God's blessing, how we should be traitors to our own souls, if we allowed ourselves to be held back by any temptation, from partaking of the spiritual food provided for us in these Divine Institutions.

Invocation and proceed to the subject.

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

GOSPEL: *Luke* xv. 1, 10.

SUBJECT: FORGIVENESS OF SINS.

See Programme of Thirty-third Discourse on the Apostles' Creed (*p.* 145), as also Fifth Petition of Lord's Prayer (*p.* 343).

INTRODUCTION.

This Gospel puts before us two Parables, one is that of the strayed sheep. The shepherd has ninety-nine yet in the fold, but he is so concerned about the one that has gone astray, that he goes in search of it, and when he finds it, he puts it on his shoulders, rejoicing, and so takes it back to the fold; and desirous that others would take part in his joy, he calls all his neighbours together, and tells them how glad he is to have found the sheep that had gone astray. The other Parable is that of a woman having ten groats, and losing one of them, she is so troubled about it, that she searches the whole house for it, and when she finds it, she tells all her neighbours of it, showing her joy for having found it.

Our Blessed Lord in applying these two Parables, would wish us to understand, that as the shepherd sought after the lost sheep, and the woman searched after the groat she had lost, and both rejoiced and called their neighbours about them to take part in their joy as they succeeded in their search, so there is joy in heaven amongst the angels upon one sinner doing penance, more than on account of ninety-nine that need not penance. Who could believe in this if we had not God's own Word for it; and is it not to recover poor sinners from their strayings in the ways of sin, that He has left to His Church the power of the remission or forgiveness of sins, which forms a distinct article of our Faith, which we profess every time we recite the Apostles'

Creed? Let us then with thankful hearts, entertain ourselves for some minutes in dwelling on this great mercy of God to poor sinful man, that taking advantage of it, we may find pardon for our sins, whenever we have the misfortune of offending our ever merciful God.

Invocation, and proceed to the subject.

FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

GOSPEL: *Luke* v. 1, 11.

SUBJECT: THE COMMANDMENTS OF GOD IN GENERAL.

See Programmes of Introductory and Concluding Discourses on the Commandments of God (*pp.* 206, 261).

INTRODUCTION.

This Gospel tells us how Peter had been out at sea fishing the whole night, but had taken nothing; and how, having let down his net at the bidding of our Divine Lord, he had, all at once, so large a take of fish, as to fill two boats, his own and another, and to fill them so as almost to sink them in the waves. This miracle of our Divine Lord is highly instructive. It points out to us, on one side, how, labouring night and day, we labour in vain, unless we have the Divine blessing on our work, according to the express words of our Saviour, who says, "*Without Me you can do nothing.*" (*John* xv. 5). It points out to us in another direction, how we can accomplish anything, when we have the blessing of God in what we undertake, as St. Paul affirms of himself, saying, "*I can do all things in Him who strengtheneth me.*" (*Philip.* iv. 13). But to whom does God give His blessing and assistance, in the way of salvation? To those only who keep His Commandments. So we observe in the Gospel, our Saviour, in reply to one, who asked Him, "*What good shall I do that I may have life everlasting?*" said, "*If thou wilt enter into life, keep the Commandments.*" (*Matt.* xix. 17). He would make the same answer to us to-day, were we to ask Him the same question. He would say to us, "*Keep the Commandments of God.*" But it is not enough to keep God's Commandments

in any kind of way—we must do so in a proper manner. Hence, nothing can be more important to us than to study and keep before our minds the manner in which we should observe God's Holy Commandments.

Behold, then, the subject we have before us, the due and proper observance of the Commandments of God.

Invocation, and proceed to the subject.

FIFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

GOSPEL: *Matt.* v. 20, 24.

SUBJECT: FRATERNAL CHARITY.

See Programme of Fifth Discourse on the Fifth Commandment (*p.* 243); also Lesson xviii., Exposition of Christian Doctrine (*p.* 536).

INTRODUCTION.

In this Gospel our Divine Lord speaks of Murder. He also speaks of injurious or abusive language, and He points out how these sins meet with due punishment. He finally requires those, who are at enmity with each other, to be reconciled, saying, that, if they come to the altar to make an offering to God, they must leave the offering there, and go to be reconciled, and that it is only then their offering will be accepted. All this shows the necessity we are under of maintaining fraternal charity with our neighbours, in fulfilment of the precept of loving our neighbour as ourselves. We shall, therefore, take occasion from the Gospel you have heard read, to consider this precept, which our Blessed Lord inculcates so frequently and earnestly in so many passages of the Gospel.

Invocation, and proceed to the subject.

SIXTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

GOSPEL: *Mark* viii. 1, 9.

SUBJECT: SACRIFICE OF THE MASS.

See Programme of Second Instruction on the Blessed Eucharist (*p.* 402); also Lesson xxvi., Exposition of Christian Doctrine (*p.* 574).

INTRODUCTION.

How wonderful the miracle recorded in this day's Gospel. With seven loaves and a few little fishes our Blessed Lord fed four thousand people, and so abundant was the meal He laid before them, that, having fully satisfied their appetite, they left after them so large a quantity of fragments as to fill seven baskets. This repast, so wonderful in every way, is a lively figure of the heavenly banquet He has provided for all Christians in the mystery of the Blessed Eucharist—a banquet always subsisting in the Church, whereby, every day throughout the world, He gives us His adorable Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity, for the food of our souls. This Divine food comes, as we all know, from the Altar, where it is consecrated during the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. We will, therefore, take occasion to entertain ourselves in making a few reflections on this Divine Mystery, the Sacrifice of the Mass, than which, as the Roman Ritual tells us, "the Church of God has nothing more worthy, more holy, or more wonderful."

Invocation, and proceed to the subject.

SEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

GOSPEL: *Matt.* vii. 15, 21.

SUBJECT: THE PRECEPTS OF THE CHURCH IN GENERAL.

See Programmes of Introductory and Concluding Instructions on the Precepts of the Church (*pp.* 270, 294).

Introduction.

In this Gospel our Divine Lord tells His disciples to be on their guard against false Prophets, that is, teachers of error, or persons who in our day are called Proselytizers. He says, these emissaries of Satan are to be known by their fruits, that is, their works, in the same way as trees are distinguished from each other, and not by their hypocritical cant, speaking of the Lord and repeating His holy name without authority. What a happiness to be members of the true Church, the Pillar and Ground of Truth, that can teach no error, nor tolerate the teaching of error within her pale. But we must not deceive ourselves by imagining we are sure of salvation by merely being members of the true Church. Alas! it will be found on the last day, that many Catholics will be told, as well as heretics, and others, "*Not every one that saith to Me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven.*" . . . "*Depart from Me all ye workers of iniquity.*" No, it is by no means sufficient for salvation to be members merely of the true Church. We must, moreover, live according to her Laws and observe her Precepts. We must, as the Apostle exhorts us, "*Walk worthy of God, in all things pleasing, being fruitful in every good work.*" (*Coloss.* i. 10). Now, to walk worthy of God, to render ourselves pleasing to God in all things, and to be fruitful in every good work, we must live up to the Precepts the Church has instituted for our observance; otherwise, we shall have to abide the terrible sentence pronounced by our Divine Lord Himself, that he who will not hear the Church, is to be accounted as a heathen and a publican. We should, therefore, as we desire to be saved, take serious account of the Precepts of the Church, that we may regulate our lives in accordance with the duties they prescribe. With this purpose in view, we will, in God's name, consider these Precepts in their general import, in order to see the authority with which they bind our consciences, and, at the same time, the manner in which we are to observe them.

Invocation, and proceed to the subject.

EIGHTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

GOSPEL: *Luke* xvi. 1, 9.

SUBJECT: THE SEVENTH COMMANDMENT.

See Programme of Instruction on the Subject (*p.* 248); also Lesson xviii., Exposition of Christian Doctrine (*p.* 539).

INTRODUCTION.

We see in this Gospel a steward acting dishonestly towards his master, and, at the same time, looking before him, and making friends for himself against the evil day, when he should lose his employment as steward. He did well to look to the future under the circumstances. This foresight in itself was wise and prudent, and our Divine Lord praised him so far as this, showing how in doing so he was more wise and prudent than the children of light. All the time, nevertheless, our Blessed Lord calls him an unjust steward in the several acts of wrong-doing he practised on his master. These various acts come under the head of the Seventh Commandment of God, which our holy religion holds up constantly to our view, that we may observe what it commands, and avoid what it forbids. We will, therefore, take occasion from the Gospel you have heard read to bestow some reflections on this important Commandment, begging of God beforehand that He will dispose us by His grace to observe it in its various details and particulars, as our great guide in all our dealings with our neighbour in matters of justice and honesty.

Proceed to the subject.

NINTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

GOSPEL: *Luke* xix. 41, 47.

SUBJECT: DISPENSATION OF GOD'S GRACES.

See Programme of Twenty-sixth Discourse on the Apostles' Creed (*p.* 89).

INTRODUCTION.

This Gospel presents to us a most affecting spectacle, the spectacle of our Divine Lord weeping over Jerusalem, and fore-

telling the calamities that were to come upon that devoted city. The Jews were God's people—chosen from amongst the rest of mankind; and God was their God in a special manner. He poured out His graces upon them with unbounded generosity, and they on their side repaid Him with obstinate ingratitude. He bore with them till His bounty and mercy giving way to His justice, He finally rejected them. As a consequence, calamity succeeded calamity, till the fearful predictions in this Gospel were verified to the letter. Their temple was destroyed, their city demolished, and they themselves were scattered throughout the world, bearing with them everywhere, and to the present day, the effects of that vengeance they provoked by the abuse of God's grace. We consequently see a frightful example in their punishment, the example of the grace of God abused, and of God's vengeance provoked by that abuse. This has happened according to a general rule in the dispensation of God's graces, on which account we should take serious account of ourselves, and the dispensation of God's graces towards us, that we may turn them to a good account, and not make ourselves liable to the consequences of receiving them in vain. We will, therefore, bestow a few reflections on the subject, the dispensation of God's graces, how He dispenses them, and the obligations they entail upon us. Before entering, however, on this most important subject, let us lift up our hearts on high, and pray, &c., &c.

Invocation, and proceed to the subject.

TENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

GOSPEL: *Luke* xviii. 9, 14.

SUBJECT: EIGHTH COMMANDMENT OF GOD.

See Programme of First Discourse on this Commandment, (*p.* 249).

INTRODUCTION.

The Parable of this Gospel presents to us two men who went up to the Temple of Jerusalem to pray. One was a proud Pharisee, and the other a humble Publican. Pride always begets contempt for others, and therefore the Pharisee, as he looked at the Publican, felt the most profound contempt for him, a contempt that made him say to God, "*I am not like other men, extortioners, unjust, as is this publican.*" Thus did his pride make

him bear false witness against his neighbour. Alas! this is a wide-spread vice amongst mankind, and a vice that has many branches. We will, therefore, find in it a most practical subject for our instruction, that we restrain our tongues, and our hearts too, from speaking and thinking ill of our neighbour.

Invocation, and proceed to the subject.

ELEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

GOSPEL: *Mark* vii. 31, 37.

SUBJECT: DISCIPLINE OF THE TONGUE.

See Programme of the Third Discourse on the Eighth Commandment of God (*p.* 252).

INTRODUCTION.

This Gospel gives us an account of how our Divine Saviour by a miracle cured a man that was deaf and dumb, giving him in a moment the faculties of hearing and speaking. When we see a deaf and dumb object, or hear of such an object, we are reminded of what a blessing it is to have the use of our ears to hear, and of our tongue to speak. Nevertheless, so prone are we to sin that we employ both our hearing and speaking—our speaking particularly—in offending God in a variety of ways, so that we earn for ourselves, every day, the reproach, "*Out of thy own mouth I judge thee, thou wicked servant.*" (*Luke* xix. 22). What more practical subject can we, therefore, entertain ourselves upon, as we see the man in the Gospel miraculously given the use of his tongue, than the discipline we should impose upon our tongue in order to avoid the abuses to which it is so liable.

Invocation, and proceed to the subject.

TWELFTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

GOSPEL: *Luke* x. 23, 37.

SUBJECT: CHARITY.

See Programme of Third Discourse on the First Commandment of God (*p.* 213).

INTRODUCTION.

We have the great Commandment of Charity set before us in this day's Gospel, the first and greatest of all God's Commandments, the first and greatest of all virtues. Faith will cease in heaven, because it will give place to actual vision. Hope will cease likewise in heaven, because it will give place to actual enjoyment. But charity will remain for ever. Hence the Apostle says of these three Divine virtues: "*And now there remain Faith, Hope, Charity, these three, but the greater of these is Charity.*" (1 *Cor.* xiii. 13). Let us, therefore, with loving hearts, give ourselves to the consideration of this first and greatest of virtues, with a view to its constant exercise, and let us pray God, that, loving and serving Him here on earth, we may see and enjoy Him for ever in heaven.

Proceed to the subject.

THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

GOSPEL : *Luke* xvii. 11, 19.

SUBJECT : MORTAL SIN.

See Programme of Second Discourse on the Subject (*p.* 197).

INTRODU TION.

We have presented to us in this day's Gospel the miracle wrought by our Divine Lord on ten men afflicted with the leprosy, whom in His compassion for them He cured, and restored to perfect health. The Holy Fathers and spiritual writers regard the disease of leprosy as a figure of sin, because, as leprosy disfigures the body, rendering it offensive and loathsome in the sight of men, so does sin render t e soul filthy and abominable in the sight of God and His angels, destroying in it the image of God, and producing in its stead the image of Satan. We will, therefore, consider Mortal Sin u nder this aspect, and entering upon the subject, let us beg of God to fill our hearts with such a hatred for sin that we may always regard it as the greatest misfortune that could befall us, and that we may abhor it as the greatest of all evils.

Proceed to the subject.

FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

GOSPEL: *Matt.* vi. 24, 33.

SUBJECT: GOD OUR FATHER PRESIDING OVER, PRESERVING, RULING AND GOVERNING THE UNIVERSE.

See Programme of Eighth Discourse on the First Article of the Apostles' Creed (*p.* 31); as also on the Fourth Petition of the Lord's Prayer (*p.* 337).

INTRODUCTION.

We are mere passengers in this world, journeying on towards the world beyond the grave. We have, nevertheless, our wants and necessities in this world. But it would be a great misfortune on that account to allow ourselves to be engrossed with these wants and necessities so as not to make the Kingdom of God and His justice the objects of our first and chief concern. It is against this misfortune our Divine Lord warns us in this day's Gospel, exhorting us to cast all our solicitude on that bountiful Father, who as a Father presides over the entire Universe, preserving, ruling, and governing all the works of His hands on earth as in heaven. Let us enter into our dear Saviour's views, and that we do so with the greater profit to our souls, let us beg of Him to bestow the grace we stand in need of for our spiritual guidance, in order that we may walk in the way He has traced out for us by His blessed word and example.

Proceed to the subject.

FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

GOSPEL: *Luke* vii. 11, 16.

SUBJECT: THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY.

See Programme of the Thirty-seventh Discourse on the Apostles' Creed, and Fourth on the Eleventh Article (*p.* 150).

INTRODUCTION.

We behold in this day's Gospel the restoration of a dead man to life. It should remind us of a great mystery that awaits us all. We are all to die like the man in the Gospel, and we are all to come to life again in the General Resurrection. We profess this

mystery every time we recite the Creed. It is to be feared, nevertheless, that we do not sufficiently think of it, and, therefore, we shall spend a few minutes very usefully in considering a subject thrillingly important to us, involving, as it does, the awful question, shall we rise from the dead to be united with our souls for the mutual enjoyment of eternal bliss, or to share with them a miserable eternity in hell?

Invocation, and proceed to the subject.

SIXTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

GOSPEL: *Luke* xiv. 1, 11.

SUBJECT: OBSERVANCE OF THE SABBATH.

See Programme of Discourse on the Third Commandment of God (*p.* 220); also on the First Precept of the Church (*p.* 275); and Lessons xvii. and xx., Exposition of Christian Doctrine (*pp.* 531, 547).

INTRODUCTION.

The Scribes and Pharisees amongst the Jews were most observant of the Sabbath day. They pushed its observance to an extreme of rigour like the Pharisees, as we may call them, of the present day. They carried their erroneous ideas so far as to find fault with our Divine Lord as a Sabbath-breaker, because He cured various diseases on the Sabbath day. Our Saviour, however, put them to shame, showing them the absurdity of their rigour, as to how the Sabbath should be observed. We will, therefore, take occasion from His teaching to consider the subject, and see in the light of Faith our obligations as Christians on the Lord's Day.

Invocation, and proceed to the subject.

SEVENTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

GOSPEL: *Matt.* xxii. 35, 46.

SUBJECT: THE LOVE OF GOD AND OUR NEIGHBOUR.

See Programmes of Discourses on both, as comprising the Commandments of God in general (*p.* 206, &c.); also Lesson xix., Exposition of Christian Doctrine (*p.* 545).

INTRODUCTION.

In this Gospel our Divine Lord lays before us the two great Precepts of loving God and loving our neighbour and tells us that on them "*dependeth the whole law and the prophets.*" It is a great happiness to see all our obligations under God's Commandments comprised in two simple Precepts, the Precept of loving God and of loving our neighbour. What obligations do we not owe to our Divine Lord for having reduced all our Christian obligations within so narrow a compass? Let us, therefore, give ourselves earnestly to the study of these two Commandments, with the assurance, as we are told by our great Teacher Jesus Christ, that, fulfilling them, we shall thereby fulfil the teaching of the law, and the prophets, and so attain eternal life.

Invocation, and proceed to the subject.

EIGHTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

GOSPEL: *Matt.* ix. 1, 8.

SUBJECT: BLASPHEMY, CURSING AND PROFANE SWEARING.

See Programme of Second Discourse on the Second Commandment of God (*p.* 219); also Lesson xvii., Exposition of Christian Doctrine (*p.* 529).

INTRODUCTION.

This Gospel gives us an account of our Divine Lord exercising His mercy and bounty on a poor man afflicted with palsy and lying in a bed. He first cured his soul of sin, and then cured his body of the palsy, restoring the poor man to strength and health. When curing his soul He said, "*Be of good heart son, thy sins are forgiven thee,*" the Pharisees, who were present, took umbrage at these words, and said within themselves, "*He blasphemeth.*" Our Blessed Lord proved immediately how unjust their accusation was by curing the palsied man. However, the accusation, notwithstanding its injustice, gives us to know, that blasphemy was a sin then amongst mankind, as it is at present, and with it people practised cursing and profane swearing as is so commonly the case in the world even still. These are sins grievously displeasing to God, and at the same time grievously hurtful to the souls of men. We will therefore take occasion

from the Gospel you have heard to bestow some reflections on them, that we may see their malice, and resolve with God's grace to avoid them.

Invocation, and proceed to the subject.

NINETEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

Gospel: *Matt.* xxii. 1, 14.

Subject: The Communion of Saints.

See Programme on the Thirty-first Discourse on the Apostles' Creed, and Fourth on the Ninth Article (*p.* 121).

Introduction.

The King in the Parable of this Gospel is God Almighty, "*the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.*" The marriage of His Son means the mystery of the Incarnation, whereby our Divine Saviour became wedded to our human nature by becoming man. The marriage feast signifies the abundance of spiritual blessings our ever bountiful Lord brought with Him into this world, and left to His Church to be one heavenly feast to the faithful to the end of time. This feast we enjoy in the Communion of Saints, and we are all invited to partake of it. Some accept the invitation, others refuse, and not only refuse, but become enemies of God, persecuting His servants, that is, the ministers of religion, in their various grades up to the Pope himself. We will be of the number of those who accept this loving invitation which comes to us from heaven, and we will, therefore, take a lively interest in considering the Communion of Saints, in which we enjoy "*the good things of the Lord*" even in this land of exile.

Invocation, and proceed to the subject.

TWENTIETH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

Gospel: *John* iv. 46, 53.

Subject: Extreme Unction, Holy Viaticum, and Preparation for Death.

See Programme of Instruction on the subject (*p.* 445); as also Lesson xxix., Exposition of Christian Doctrine (*p.* 602).

INTRODUCTION.

We behold in this day's Gospel a Ruler, that is a man high in authority, brought low by the dangerous illness of his son. In his affliction he has recourse to our Blessed Lord, who cures the son though at a distance, and, moreover, bestows the grace of faith on the whole family, whereby they believed in our Divine Lord. It was usual in this way for our Heavenly Physician, when asked to cure the body, to cure the soul also of its spiritual disorders, and His conduct in this respect reminds us, that He has left us a Sacrament in His Church to be a remedy at once for our spiritual and bodily diseases. This is the Sacrament of Extreme Unction. We will, therefore, take occasion from the Gospel to bestow some reflections on this salutary Sacrament, and we will unite with it some observations on the Holy Viaticum, and the manner of preparing for death.

A few words to engage attention, a short invocation, and proceed to the subject.

TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

GOSPEL: *Matt.* xviii. 23, 35.

SUBJECT: FORGIVENESS OF INJURIES.

See Programme of Instruction on Fifth Petition of the Lord's Prayer, § 6 (*p.* 347); as also of Fifth Discourse on the Fifth Commandment of God, § 2 (*p.* 244).

INTRODUCTION.

The Parable of the Gospel you have just heard puts before us in the strongest light the obligation we are under of forgiving each other our mutual offences, as we expect and hope the Almighty will forgive us our offences against His Divine Majesty, which are infinitely greater than any offence a fellow creature can be guilty of in our regard. The Parable, it is true, speaks only of a money debt, but in its scope and design it comprises debts of reparation, or which men incur in virtue of any injury they may do their neighbours in person, in property, or in character. All these debts we are bound to pardon, as we shall see in the reflections we are about to make.

Bespeak attention; a short invocation, and proceed to the subject.

TWENTY-SECOND SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

GOSPEL: *Matt.* xxii. 15, 21.

SUBJECT: MAN, HIS CREATION, DIGNITY AND FALL, AND THE PROMISE OF A REDEEMER.

See Programme of Discourse on the subject (*p.* 27).

INTRODUCTION.

We see in this Gospel how the Pharisees sought to entrap our Divine Lord into some statement or declaration, which would be the ground of an accusation against Him. We see also how He confounded them by His answers. *Render, therefore, to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things that are God's.* This answer He gave as regarded Cæsar, from observing the coin they presented to Him, and seeing Cæsar's inscription and image upon it; and He added with regard to God, that, whereas God has made us to His own image and likeness, and has inscribed Himself, so to say, on our souls, we owe it to His Divine Majesty, on that account, to give our entire being, body and soul, to His love and service. We will, therefore, take occasion from the Gospel to bestow some consideration on ourselves, by taking account of our creation and the dignity of our nature, as also of the fall of our first parents, and the promise of a Redeemer.

Invite attention; a short invocation, and proceed to the subject.

TWENTY-THIRD SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

GOSPEL: *Matt.* xii. 18, 26.

SUBJECT: DEATH OF THE SINNER.

See Programme of Thirty-fifth Discourse on the Apostles' Creed, and Second on the Eleventh Article (*p.* 142).

INTRODUCTION.

The Gospel you have just heard read contains the record of our Divine Redeemer restoring a young maiden to life. He is Master of life and death, and it is always as easy for Him to restore life, when one has died, as it is for Him to give life in the first instance. Nevertheless, except in the case of a miracle

there is no coming back once we shall have entered the house of our eternity; if we die a happy death all shall be well, and well for eternity; but if we have the misfortune of dying a bad death, all shall be miserable, and miserable for all eternity. How many poor souls have passed into the other world making a bad death! Oh! if they could come back! Alas! the supposition is impossible. But will not we take a lesson from their sad lot, and provide against a bad death, by thinking on it beforehand, and shaping the conduct of our lives so as to avert so dreadful, and, at the same time, so irreparable a calamity? Let us then take occasion from the spectacle of death which the Gospel sets before us, to make some reflections on the death of the sinner, begging of God to fill our souls with a holy fear on the subject, and grant us the grace of escaping the misfortune of dying a bad death.

Proceed to the subject.

TWENTY-FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST.

GOSPEL: *Matt.* xxiv. 15, 35.

SUBJECT: PARTICULAR OR GENERAL JUDGMENT.

See *First Sunday of Advent.*

See Programmes of Twenty-first and Twenty-second Discourses on the Apostles' Creed (*pp.* 68, 73).

INTRODUCTION.

This is the last Sunday of the ecclesiastical year. Very appropriately, therefore, does the Church bring before us in her liturgy of to-day that great event, the General Judgment, which is to put an end to this world, and launch mankind into the ocean of eternity. We will all of this generation have passed away long before this event will happen, and our fate for an eternity of weal or woe will have been sealed by the sentence of Particular Judgment each of us must undergo immediately after death. On this account we will entertain ourselves to-day on the subject of the Particular Judgment, more especially because the Church brings the General Judgment under the consideration of her children again on Sunday next.

Invocation, and proceed to the subject.

FESTIVALS.

THE NATIVITY.

See Programme of Fifteenth Discourse on the Apostles' Creed, and Fifth on the Third Article (*p.* 56).

THE CIRCUMCISION.

See Programme of Sixteenth Discourse on the Apostles' Creed, and Sixth on the Third Article (*p.* 57).

THE EPIPHANY.

See Programme of Seventeenth Discourse on the Apostles' Creed, and Seventh on the Third Article (*p.* 59).

THE ANNUNCIATION.

See Programmes of Eleventh and Twelfth Discourses on the Apostles' Creed, the First and Second on the Third Article (*pp.* 41, 44).

HOLY THURSDAY.

See Programmes of Instructions on the Blessed Eucharist, and *select* (*p.* 400, &c.)

GOOD FRIDAY.

See Programme of Eighteenth Discourse on the Apostles' Creed (*p.* 62).

EASTER SUNDAY.

See Programme of Nineteenth Discourse on the Apostles' Creed (*p.* 64).

ASCENSION THURSDAY.

See Programme of Twentieth Discourse on the Apostles' Creed (*p.* 66).

WHIT-SUNDAY.

See Programmes of Discourses on the Holy Ghost, and *select* (*p.* 75, &c.)

CORPUS CHRISTI.

See Programmes of Instructions on the Blessed Eucharist, and *select* (*p.* 400, &c.)

ALL SAINTS.

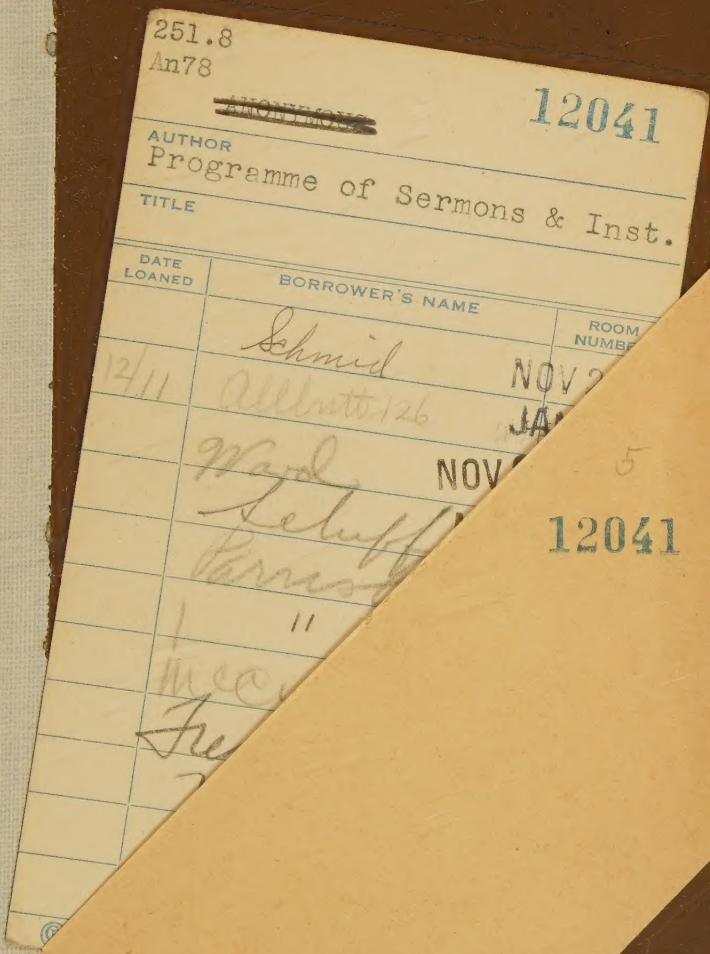
See Programme of Instruction on Devotion to the Angels and Saints (*p.* 370).

ALL SOULS.

See Programme of Forty-first Discourse on the Apostles' Creed (*p.* 176).

Errata

p. 76 -


251.8
An78
12041
AUTHOR
Programme of Sermons & Inst.
TITLE
DATE LOANED
BORROWER'S NAME
ROOM NUMBER
Schmid
NOV
12/11
Allnutt 126
NOV
Ward
11
12041